

CASTLE MEMORIES

TWENTY TALES OF EDINBURGH CASTLE

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Foreword

THE pride of Scotland is Edinburgh, and the pride of Edinburgh is her Castle. These sketches are written in the hope that they may help to make familiar some of the many stirring episodes in the Castle's long story, knowledge of which intensifies the pride which Scotsmen feel, when they look upon the most famous fortress of their land.

In preparing the sketches many chronicles, well known and little known, have been consulted; but a special debt is owing to the late James Grant, whose "Memorials of the Castle of Edinburgh," published sixty years ago and now out of print, first suggested the idea of the present book, and guided the writer to many an old authority.

Contents

FIRST MEMORY		
THE PASSING OF A QUEEN, A.D. 1093	.	1
SECOND MEMORY		
A PERILOUS CLIMB, A.D. 1312	.	8
THIRD MEMORY		
THE BLACK DINNER, A.D. 1440	.	14
FOURTH MEMORY		
A LEAP FOR FREEDOM, A.D. 1479	.	21
FIFTH MEMORY		
THE BURNING OF LADY GLAMMIS, A.D. 1537	.	26
SIXTH MEMORY		
THE MARTYRDOM OF DEAN FORRET, A.D. 1539	.	33
SEVENTH MEMORY		
THE END OF AN OLD ALLIANCE, A.D. 1560	.	40
EIGHTH MEMORY		
THE CASTLE AND QUEEN MARY, A.D. 1561-1567	.	48
NINTH MEMORY		
THE LAST STAND FOR QUEEN MARY, A.D. 1573	.	56

CONTENTS

TENTH MEMORY	
A ROYAL WITCH-HUNTER, A.D. 1591	65
ELEVENTH MEMORY	
THE CASTLE AND THE COVENANT, A.D. 1640	72
TWELFTH MEMORY	
THE CASTLE AND OLIVER CROMWELL, A.D. 1650	80
THIRTEENTH MEMORY	
ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL, MARQUIS OF ARGYLL, A.D. 1660	88
FOURTEENTH MEMORY	
"ALAS, UNFORTUNATE ARGYLL!" A.D. 1662-1685	96
FIFTEENTH MEMORY	
A GREAT CHURCHMAN, A.D. 1675-1683	104
SIXTEENTH MEMORY	
"BONNIE DUNDEE," A.D. 1689	114
SEVENTEENTH MEMORY	
THE CASTLE FOR KING JAMES! A.D. 1689	123
EIGHTEENTH MEMORY	
A WOMAN MARPLOT, A.D. 1715	133
NINETEENTH MEMORY	
THE CASTLE AND PRINCE CHARLIE, A.D. 1745	142
TWENTIETH MEMORY	
"THE HONOURS OF SCOTLAND"	155

CASTLE MEMORIES

FIRST MEMORY

The Passing of a Queen

A.D. 1093

COULD walls but speak, what a flood of memories would pour forth from the old citadel that looks down on Scotland's capital; memories of feuds and fightings, of bold assault and vigorous defence, memories of great events in times of peace and of decisive episodes of war, memories, some of which are a shame to think of, and others whose mere mention fills the heart of the Scot with pardonable pride. For the most part, as befits a nation's fortress, the associations of the grey old Castle are with men of war, strong and forceful men, whose strenuousness either for good or evil has left an indelible mark on their country's story. Yet, singularly enough, the earliest memory of all those which possess historic clearness and worth is that of a sweet and gracious

FIRST MEMORY

woman, whose life was spent in furthering the things that make for peace, and who finds a fitting memorial in the little chapel which bears her name, where, more than eight hundred years ago, on the eve of her passing from this stormy world, she sought and found her strength in God.

Three and twenty years had gone since Margaret, the fair young English princess, had married Malcolm Canmore, Scotland's King, and in these years she had done great things for her adopted country. Rude and ignorant the people were when she came among them, and rude and ignorant likewise the Court, compared with what she had known in more cultured England, and, with a success which has not always attended similar efforts, she had sought to give to Scotland some of those things that made England enviable. Most notable of all was her gift of England's Church. Scotland sorely needed the gift, for a reformation in things religious was urgently required. The old Celtic Church had largely outlived its usefulness, and in bringing Scotland under the then beneficent influence of the great Catholic Church, Queen Margaret rendered royal service. Love smoothed the path of her endeavours, for love gained her an ally in the King, and, backed by his support, her own sweet influence was irresistible. It is touching to read how her big, boisterous husband showed his reverent love for his good and cultured wife. The missals she

THE PASSING OF A QUEEN

3

gave him he could not read, but often he would be seen pressing them to his heart, and kissing them for love of her who gave them. And her saintliness too had a wondrous uplifting power. "Seeing that Christ dwelt in her heart, he was always ready to follow her counsels. What she disliked he disliked and what she loved he loved for the love of her."

It was in Dunfermline that the royal pair chiefly dwelt, for that was then the Scottish capital; but for the Castle of Edinburgh they had a great fondness, and it was mainly through their repeated sojourn there that the hamlet round the Castle's base grew steadily in importance, until at last it ousted Dunfermline from its primacy. Not the Castle, however, as we know it now, but a much humbler and less extensive edifice; and the surroundings too were very different. Forest and moor and tangled brake occupied the place now filled by the gardens and streets of the great city, and at the foot of the Castle rock, where children play and lovers promenade, wild beasts had then their lair. But the glorious unexcelled outlook was the same, and delighted the royal occupants eight centuries ago even as it does us who feast our eyes upon it to-day.

Many happy days did Queen Margaret spend in the Castle on the rock; but the day which we know most about was the last of her days on earth, 16th November 1093. Very much against her will, King Malcolm, along with their eldest son, Edward, and

FIRST MEMORY

4
a great Scottish force, had gone south to fight the English King, William Rufus, who had recently surprised and captured the Scottish border castle of Alnwick, and had put the garrison to the sword. With the younger members of the royal family the Queen remained in Edinburgh, and with anxious foreboding awaited the tidings of the fight. Sickness had wasted her frame in the past six months ; her practice of fasting and long night-watches did not help matters, and now her mental anxiety, added to these other causes, brought her very near to death. The fight took place at Alnwick on 13th November, and with the saddest result, for Malcolm and the young prince both were slain. Queen Margaret, lying on her sick-bed, knew it not, but feared the worst. Three days later, feeling that her own end was approaching, she was carried to the little chapel which she had erected, and which still remains—the sole relic of the castle of her day—and there receiving the Holy Communion she made her peace with God and man. Strengthened in spirit, but very weak in body, she was then carried back to her own apartments, and taking in her hand the Black Rood of Scotland, with its precious relic of the true cross, she waited for the end.

But ere the end came a further cup of sorrow had to be drained. News had by this time come from Alnwick, and on her son Edgar entering the room the dying Queen asked anxiously how things had

gone. "How fares it," she said, "with the King and my Edward?" "They are well," said the boy. It was a kindly evasion of the melancholy truth, and the widowed Queen pierced through its well-meant ambiguity. "I know it, I know it," she exclaimed, "but by this blessed Rood, and by your love, my son, for me, I adjure thee to tell me the truth." So the truth was told. "The King and Edward are both slain," he sorrowfully answered, and then she knew the worst. Her heart was broken, yet her faith remained steadfast, and in her sorrow she found strength to give God thanks. "I thank Thee, O God," she murmured, "that in the hour of my departure Thou hast been pleased to make me endure so bitter anguish. May it purify me in some measure from the corruption of my sin." It was a more than human prayer, and was born of a religious code that in some of its demands sadly overstrained poor human souls. But it ended with a cry entirely human, for it came from a broken and wearied heart that longed for peace: "*Jesu, libera me,*" "Lord Jesus, deliver me." Her prayer was heard, and the soul of Margaret, queen and saint, passed to its eternal rest.

But these were wild times, and it was with much difficulty that the poor frail body, from which the soul had fled, found its fitting rest in the quiet grave. Tidings of King Malcolm's death had been carried

to his brother Donalbain, who, exiled to the Highlands, had been long waiting on the course of events ; and when the attendants of the dead Queen recovered from their first stupor of grief, they found, to their dismay, that the Castle entrance was beset by a horde of fierce Highlanders, all eager to compass the death of the royal children, and so clear the way to the throne for their chief. The steep western side of the rock, however, was left unguarded, no watch there being thought necessary, and in the dead of night, by a postern, facing what is now Castle Terrace, the prey escaped from the snare of the fowler. The Queen's body was lowered down the steep scarp and conveyed to Queensferry, and thence across the firth to Dunfermline, a 'miraculous' mist helping to conceal the fugitives from the watchful eyes of their enemy. Once arrived at the royal seat, all danger for the time was ended ; and with due solemnity the Abbey which the Queen herself had founded received the illustrious dead.

In later years strange legends gathered round her name. Men remembered her love for Scotland, and could not bring themselves to think such love could ever die, or ever cease to bless. So they told how the good Queen continued to think of the land where once she reigned, and how she intervened whenever she could do it service. At the battle of Largs she was seen leading an army of white-robed followers to beat back the invading fleet ; again, on the eve of

Bannockburn, she lent her aid, and at other times beside. These are but legends, yet they have an inner meaning that is true, for they speak to us of a love of long ago, cherished by a Queen for her people, and of a service of love rendered long ago, whose fruits have been plucked by Scotland all through the centuries, and some of which are with us still.

SECOND MEMORY

A Perilous Climb

A.D. 1312

FEW periods in our nation's history are better known or more gratefully remembered amongst us than the closing years of the thirteenth century and the beginning of the fourteenth, when, under Wallace and Bruce, Scotland battled for her independence. The fiercest and most decisive fights in that long, stubborn struggle were fought elsewhere than in Edinburgh, but there is no single event in the whole campaign which better merits remembrance than one of which the Castle of Edinburgh was the scene on 14th March 1312.

By that time the fortunes of King Robert the Bruce had taken a favourable turn. The English, who, ever since the fatal day at Falkirk sixteen years before, had held Scotland firmly in their grasp, had been driven back across the Border, and the Scots were once more masters in their own country. Yet not

completely. Three important strongholds were still held by English garrisons, the Castles of Edinburgh, Roxburgh, and Stirling, and until these should be captured Scotland was not free. Of the three, Stirling Castle was the strongest and most important, and not until Bannockburn had been fought did its garrison surrender ; but the other two found earlier deliverance from the hands of the enemy. Roxburgh fell first, being captured through the clever stratagem and irresistible bravery of the Black Douglas and his followers. Tidings of his success were carried to Edinburgh, where his comrade and rival in arms, Sir Thomas Randolph of Strathdon, first Earl of Moray, was then besieging the Castle with much determination but with provokingly small success. Assaults had been made repeatedly along the one available approach to the Castle, but were always driven back by the watchful and securely-posted English ; and Randolph, keen and able soldier though he was, found it necessary to adopt the slower but surer method of blockade. Yet he fretted at the delay, and this news from Roxburgh made him more impatient than ever, and increasingly anxious to devise some plan of attack which would promise success. A surprise assault might succeed where open assault had failed, but how was a surprise assault to be delivered against a Castle made impregnable on three sides by its ring of precipices, and whose watch on the one narrow neck of possible approach was so

unfailing? The task seemed hopeless, and yet it was achieved.

Among the followers of Randolph was a brave, skilful, an ingenious soldier named William Francis, whose young days had been spent in the Castle, where his father then was the keeper of the fortress. Francis knew his leader's keen desire, and, sympathising with it, proposed to him one day a plan by which, if men were found daring enough, the wished-for end might be gained. What that plan was, Barbour, in his fourteenth-century poem, "The Bruce," tells us quite dramatically. "Methinks, sir," said Francis to Sir Thomas, "that you would be blythe if some one would but show you how to get over the Castle walls. I shall undertake to show you a way by which, with a short ladder of twelve foot, it may be done. And I shall myself be foremost of all." Randolph listened attentively and eagerly, and Francis went on to tell how, in his younger days, when a resident in the Castle, he had fallen in love with a Scottish lass who dwelt in the Grassmarket, and as he was forbidden to leave the Castle, he had found out a way by which, under cover of the darkness, he could scale the rampart wall, descend the precipitous rock on the south side, visit his lady-love, and return again without anyone being the wiser or himself the worse. So often had he done this that he could travel along the dangerous path in the darkest night.

And giff ye think ye will assay
To pass up efter me that way
Up to the wall I sall you bring,
Giff God us saves from perceiving
Of them that watches on the wall.

Randolph heard the project with delight, selected thirty reliable men, and on the night of 14th March —a night of pitchy darkness—headed by Francis, the perilous climb began.

As we look at the rock-face to-day the climb seem madness for any one to attempt even in broad daylight, when there is no danger threatening either from darkness or the presence of an enemy. What must it have seemed to those thirty heroes, all heavily clad in cumbrous armour, when, with darkness around and the enemy overhead, they slowly threaded their hazardous way up the cliff! None but men of the greatest courage, the coolest brain, and the most devoted hearts could have dared it; for

The crag was high and hideous
And the clymbing richt perilous.

When half-way up the crags they found a narrow ledge where they halted to recover their breath and prepare for the further climb. It was an anxious moment, for they were now within ear-shot of the Castle, and as they rested there they heard the officer of the watch going his rounds directly overhead. Did a sound but reach his ear or a glint of

their armour catch his eye, they were doomed men.
Says Barbour —

Now help them God, that all thing may !
For in full gret perill are they.
For micht they see them there suld nane
Escape out of that place unslain :
To death with stanes they suld them ding
That they micht help themselves naething.

But the officer passed on, and they began to breathe freely, when suddenly there came a shout from the guard above, "Away with you ! I see you well !" and a stone hurtled from the rampart right over the spot where the men had halted. With rare presence of mind they kept still as death. Not a sound was heard save the thud, thud, of the rolling boulder as it rebounded down the steep face of the rock ; and with a laugh to his own comrades, whom he had been trying to startle, the trickster above moved on.

The moment for action had now come. One more effort and the summit of the rock was reached, when nothing remained between the bold climbers and victory but the outer rampart wall, not twelve feet in height. By the help of the rope ladder this last obstacle was easily surmounted. First Francis, then Sir Andrew Gray, then Randolph himself, and after these the whole of the gallant band swarmed up and over. In a trice the guard was disposed of, and the fortunes of the night decided. Hearing a disturbance the alarmed men of the garrison came hurrying

out, roused unwillingly from their midnight sleep, but only to find themselves face to face with thirty determined men, alert, brave, and capable; and in spite of the bravery of the English Governor, who fell with many others in the fight, the victory of the Scots was complete. So the Castle of Edinburgh came once more into Scottish hands; and when we think of the cool daring and patriotic devotedness then displayed, there are few who will not agree with the old chronicler when he sums up his tribute of admiration in the words—

I heard never in nae time gane
What castell was sae stoutly tane.

THIRD MEMORY

The Black Dinner

A.D. 1440

ONE of the glories of Edinburgh Castle to-day is the restored Banqueting Hall, which, through the patriotic liberality of the late Mr W. Nelson, after long years of neglect, is now seen again in something like its early beauty. Its memories are many; and among them is one which no guide ever omits to mention, however brief his exposition may be. "This is the Hall," he says, "where the famous Black Dinner was given to the Earl of Douglas, and there, near the doorway, is the opening from the buttery by which the black bull's head was handed in." The reference is to the most shameful tragedy ever enacted within the Castle walls—that which befel on the twenty-third day of November 1440.

Scotland was then suffering from a misfortune but too common in her history—a boy-king. James II.

had only reached the age of seven when the cruel murder of his father called him to the perilous throne, and during his minority the government of the country was entrusted by the Scottish Estates to the hands of two Regents, Sir William Crichton and Sir Alexander Livingstone. Neither of them was of the first rank among the nobles, which, indeed, was one of the chief reasons for their being selected. They were not dangerous to the reigning house, as a more prominent noble might have been. But it was far from a happy arrangement. The possession of power whetted the ambition of both, and as the public importance of each depended largely on the degree of his proximity to the little King, repeated cases of "king-stealing" took place, which to-day seem humorous, but which then were serious enough, and greatly unsettled the life of the country. It required the presence of a common danger to make the Regents lay aside their rivalry, and this was supplied by the growing power and assumptions of the great house of Douglas.

No other family in Scotland had a record of national service or territorial importance equal to that of this noble house. From the days of Bruce the Earls of Douglas were Scotland's foremost fighters, and had long been the trusted guardians of the Border. Over-lords of practically the whole of the southern district, they had wealth and influence at least equal to the King, and in addition

to their Scottish dignities they held an honourable place in the wider European world as possessors of the great Duchy of Touraine. But what, above all else, made the presence of so powerful a family a threatening danger to the throne, was that the Douglas blood was as 'royal' as the blood of the King himself. It was this that caused the Regents to regard with constant suspicion and dread every defiant word and act of the great Earl Archibald, and from one who disdained to regard the Regents as his equals there came many such words and acts. But when, in 1439, the bold Earl Archibald died and was succeeded by his son William, a boy of sixteen years of age, the Regents breathed freely and thought they had found deliverance.

Boys, however, in these days were often marvellously like men. The stern nature of the times forced their growth, and this 'boy' Earl soon gave signs of being as dangerous as his father. With a retinue of a thousand armed men he moved about the country ; claiming a sovereign's privilege he despatched an embassy to the King of France to arrange for his succession to the Dukedom of Touraine ; in his style of living he far outshone the King ; and when summoned to take his place in the Scottish Parliament he disdained to obey. If this was the 'boy,' what would the 'man' become? Crichton and Livingstone decided there should be no man. Douglas must die.

But how was he to be got into their power? Only

by stratagem could it be done, and strategy of the vilest and most dishonourable kind was employed. To the young Earl there went a letter, courteous and flattering, regretting that, through misunderstandings, the State had hitherto been deprived of his services, and inviting him to come to Edinburgh to help in "advising for the good of the realm." With surprising readiness the boy took the bait, which flattered his vanity by its recognition of his importance, and in company with his younger and only brother David, and a small but gallant following, he rode off to the help of the State. A foolhardy chivalry led him not only to dispense with his usual numerous escort of fighting men, but even, as says an old ballad, to discard his armour. He would make plain to all men his trust in his Sovereign's honour, and his fearlessness of his foes.

But tak' the plate-jack frae aff my back
 It hasna been aff this mony a year ;
 And tak' the basnet frae my head,
 An' hing up, till I come hame, my spear.

An' fetch me my horse an' my hawk sae guid,
 An' my doublet o' red gar to me bring ;
 I'll let them see that my heart's as stout
 Beneath a claith-fauld, as steel harnessing.

For two days they halted at Castle Crichton, twelve miles south of Edinburgh, where their subtle host entertained them with every honour and kindness which he could devise, and then in high spirits over their reception they moved on to the capital. Older

heads among the Earl's followers were wiser than was their impulsive leader, and preached caution. At least, they urged upon him, let him leave his younger brother David behind, and not risk placing the whole family in hands whose friendliness was doubtful. But the boy was a *boy* then and not a *man*, and refused to listen to words of prudence which cast a doubt on the honour of his entertainer. Nor was the younger brother a whit behind the elder in chivalrous trust; so together the lads rode up the Castle Hill, and accompanied by Crichton, Livingstone, and others, entered the grim fortress which they were never more to leave.

The prey was snared; but for a little longer the loops of the snare were not pulled tight, and the sad pitiful farce of friendliness went on. The little King was there, waiting to receive his guests, and, boy-like, the three fraternised well together, proceeding by and bye in company to the great Banqueting Hall, where a royal feast was ready. And still the farce continued; the hearty laugh went round, and every thought of danger seemed a shame in the midst of so great friendliness. But now the farce ends and tragedy begins. Suddenly Crichton throws off the mask, and in harsh, stern words upbraids the young Earl for the sins of the house of Douglas, their lawless doings, and their disloyalty to the throne; and while he is still speaking there is carried up the long hall and placed upon the table

right in front of the startled boy, a *Black Bull's Head!* It is the symbol of death—the “black cap” of those old days—and the doomed boy knows its meaning. Springing to his feet he finds that he is encircled by enemies, and, in spite of brave resistance, he and his brother are seized, and bound, and dragged away. To the little King, sitting there on the seat of honour, the whole scene is one of horror—poor boy, he is only ten years old—and, “weeping sorely,” he appeals first to Crichton and then to Livingstone to have mercy on the lads. He might as well speak to a stone. “Either you or they must die,” Crichton roughly tells him, “for the kingdom of Scotland cannot hold both a Stuart and a Douglas.” No time is lost in completing the tragedy. A summary trial is held, at which the child-King is compelled to preside; the death sentence is passed, and the two victims, hurried out from this travesty of justice, are led to the western courtyard of the Castle and there beheaded.

It was a foul and shameful act, and its memory still stirs the heart to a vain protest, though four centuries have gone, nor can any plea of political necessity excuse its foulness or wipe away its shame. It may, indeed, be pleaded that in those fierce days deeds of blood were common; which is sadly true. But not such deeds as this, where the gross treachery of the murderers and the tender youth of the murdered boys intensify the guilt and gloom of the

tragedy. Of this black deed the judgment of our countrymen has always been exceptionally severe—and justly so. How severe let this verse of an old ballad witness—

Edinburgh Castell, toun, and tour,
God grant ye sinke for sinne !
And yat even for the black dinour
Earl Douglas gat therein.

FOURTH MEMORY

A Leap for Freedom

A.D. 1479

IN the year 1479 there was much speculation in Edinburgh as to what was to be the outcome of the strange state of affairs prevailing in the Castle. In place of having, as usual, one royal resident, it then had two: there was the King James III., a young man of twenty-seven years of age, and there was his younger brother, Alexander, Duke of Albany. But while the King dwelt in the royal apartments, his brother occupied the prison; and—so it was said—would only leave the prison for the block.

That Albany found himself in this unhappy position was due not more to his own imprudence than to the King's weakness and folly. James III. was not the king for turbulent Scotland in the fifteenth century. He was a bookworm, an amateur musician, a bit of an architect, and that at a time

when such tastes were not appreciated in kings. The country required strength and resolute action in its rulers, but these qualities it did not find in King James. And when he proceeded to choose as companions men of kindred taste, quite regardless of their ignoble birth, there were many in Scotland who lost patience with their monarch, and wished for a change. They had not far to look for a suitable substitute. The King's own brothers, the Duke of Albany and the Earl of Mar, were all that the King was not—manly, daring, dashing soldiers, and quite free from any 'weakness' for learning or the arts. Whether the brothers encouraged the growing popular feeling or not is uncertain, but James was convinced that they did, and one day Edinburgh was startled to learn that the handsome young Earl of Mar had died of 'fever' in the Canongate—bled to death in a bath was another account—and that the Duke of Albany was imprisoned in David's Tower, the massive structure which then crowned the precipitous north-east side of the Castle rock.

There was no doubt as to Albany's perilous position. His only hope of life lay in escape, but his prison was one of the strongest in Scotland, and its position, poised on the summit of the steep precipice, made escape seem out of the question. Yet it was achieved, and the story of its achievement forms one of the most daring episodes in the Castle's long history.

Though a prisoner the Prince was not stinted of creature comforts, and when one day word was brought to him that a French ship, with a cargo of wine had arrived at Leith, he received ready permission for his servant to go and negotiate for the purchase of a barrel or two. Two small barrels were in due course delivered at the Castle, and, without any vexatious examination, were handed over to the royal captive in the Tower. It was a luxury none would grudge him. The barrels contained wine, sure enough, but one held in addition the means of escape—a strong rope; and enclosed in a waxen roll was a letter bidding the reader make haste to use the rope, as it had been determined by his enemies that on the morrow he should die!

Albany was quick to plan and to act. The captain of the guard, a jovial, hearty soul, was invited to assist him in broaching the barrel, and readily consented. So after the last rounds for the night had been completed, he came to the apartmeut of his prisoner host, and there the two made merry. The three soldiers, too, who formed the Prince's special guard shared in the merriment, for was there not ample wine for all! A great fire burned in the fireplace, and all was as comfortable and cheery as might be. But

The fire was hett, and the wyne was strong,
and soon Albany perceived that the hour for action
had come. Springing to his feet, ere his astonished

guest would guess what was coming, he "strak the captane with ane whinger and slew him, and also stiked other two with his own hand." The third unfortunate soldier was despatched with like brutal celerity by Albany's faithful "chamber-chield," and then to the deed of blood was added a needless act of unredeemed horror. Lifting the dead bodies of their victims, the Prince and his attendant hurled them, one after the other, into the great fireplace, and there left them, a mass of roasting human flesh!

The guard being thus despatched, the means of escape had now to be seen to, but the presence of other soldiers on watch in the Castle yard and at the Castle gate rendered the utmost caution necessary. Stealing out of the Tower the two fugitives hurried to the darkest part of the battlements immediately over the steep rock face (facing Princes Street Gardens), where the height is some two hundred feet, and there the rope of deliverance was brought into use. The faithful chamber-chield descended first, and slowly slid down the dangerous cliff. But, to his master's horror, the taut rope suddenly slackened, and from far down below in the darkness came muffled groans. At once Albany realised what had happened. The rope had proved too short for the great height, and the poor fellow had slipped his hold when the rope ended and had fallen on the rocks beneath. Hastening back to his apartment, and staying not to look on its gruesome sight, the Prince tore the

sheets from off his bed, twisted them into a substitute for a rope, and having with this lengthened the rope a little more, launched himself over the wall down into the dark abyss. The ground was reached in safety, and there he found, lying unconscious, with a broken thigh-bone, his devoted servant.

What followed is as much to the credit of the Prince's heart as the episode which had just taken place above is to his shame. To leave the sufferer there till morning was to ensure his death, so, calling his giant strength to his assistance, Albany shouldered the servant, and, unaided, carried him to a place of safety, most probably to the house of a reliable friend. This done, he himself made haste to Leith, where the 'wine' ship was waiting to receive him, and ere the sun rose was bounding over the waves to his own castle of Dunbar, where he could defy the army of his royal brother. The leap for freedom had succeeded.

FIFTH MEMORY

The Burning of Lady Glammis

A.D. 1537

THE Castle Hill, where now stretches the broad Esplanade, has been the scene of many a tragic ending to human life, when unhappy men and women have met their doom, either at the block, on the gallows, or at the stake. To-day all civilised peoples shudder at the last terrible mode of execution—death by fire. Yet only three hundred years ago it was one with which Scotland was quite familiar, and on many such deaths did the Castle walls look down. Three of these stand out on the pages of its memory with lurid and sad distinctness, for all three were cases where death was undeserved, and the execution was itself a shameful crime. In one the flames were kindled by savage hate, in another they were lit by 'religious' bitterness, and

in the third they were the outcome of superstitious fears. It is with the first of these that we are concerned here, when, on 17th July 1537, Janet Douglas, Lady Glammis, one of Scotland's noblest, perished at the stake, the victim of a double hate.

It occurred when James V. was King ; and a good king he was. As the "Gudeman of Ballengeich" he lives in story as a king who won his way to the affections of his people in no ordinary degree, and sober history tells that he did much for his country's good, but he could be a "good hater" too, and this episode on the Castle Hill shows how a personal feud can lead even a good king to do an evil and unkingly act. In James the old enmity of the Stuarts against the Douglases burned fierce as ever, and with much reason ; for all through his boyhood he had suffered greatly at their hands. Archibald, Earl of Angus, the "Red Douglas," as Chancellor of Scotland, had held the young King in his power, and the Douglas grip was a very 'siccar' grip ; James had been practically a prisoner, and had been made to stomach many an indignity. But in 1528, when he had reached the age of seventeen, a chance of escape offered itself, and James successfully embraced it. The nobles rallied round the boy-King, for they were glad to help on the overthrow of the proud Douglas house, and soon every Douglas was either a fugitive across the English border, or had died by order of the King.

A remorseless, implacable hatred of the whole house of Douglas henceforth possessed him, and though merciful and kindly to other men, to a *Douglas* he was never known to show either kindness or mercy. "No Douglas," he had sworn, "shall find a refuge in Scotland while I am King!" And he kept his word. There was indeed one Douglas left unscathed, but she was a woman, had married, and so changed her name and interests, and for a time at least James left her comparatively untroubled. This was Janet Douglas, Lady Glammis, the sister of the banished Earl of Angus. Her first husband, Lord Glammis, had died; and after a few years she had married again Archibald Campbell of Skipnish, with whom she now lived in a remote part of the Highlands, seeking to keep as far out of the King's path as possible.

But the vindictive hate of a rejected suitor contrived to have her brought under the royal wrath. She was a beautiful woman; says an old account, "She was the most celebrated beauty in the nation. She was of middle stature, not too fat; her face of an oval form with full eyes; her complexion extremely fair and beautiful, with a majestic mien." When she became a widow, many had sought her hand in marriage, amongst others being William Lyon, a relative of her late husband, but she would have none of him. Even after her second marriage he continued to press his unwelcome attentions upon

her, but was summarily and indignantly dismissed. Then it was that his love rejected turned to hate, and he set about with diabolic malice to compass her destruction.

The King was his hope. James's known hostility to the Douglas house promised him a means of gratifying his own private revenge, if only that hostility could be directed towards Lady Glammis. And this was only too easy to do. Information was given to James of alleged treasonable plots and traitorous acts on the part of Lady Glammis, by which she aimed at restoring to power her exiled brother and destroying the life of the King himself. It was a spark applied to a ready fire, and soon Lady Glammis, her husband, her young son Lord Glammis and her chaplain, all found themselves imprisoned in Edinburgh Castle, charged with attempting to poison the King, and with being in correspondence with the King's enemy, the Earl of Angus.

No time was lost in bringing the unfortunate lady before her judges. The rack was applied to her servants, which extorted a 'confession' supporting the accusations of her miserable enemy. That she corresponded with her brother in exile, as occasion offered, was indeed very probable; but of real proof of the *poisoning*, which was the serious charge, there was none. Said the English governor of Berwick, writing at the time to Henry VIII., "I can perceive

no substantial ground or proof of the matter"; and that appears to have been the general opinion of the time. In presence of her judges, and confronted with the manufactured evidence of her guilt, the prisoner made a spirited and able defence, echoes of which have come floating down the centuries. The words are probably 'edited,' but the sentiment rings true.

"I am here accused," she is reported to have said, "for purposing to kill the King; and to make my pretended crime appear more frightful, it is given out that the way was to be by *poison*. Poison! I never saw poison! Let them tell me where I bought it, or who procured it for me? Or, though I had it, how could I use it, since I never came near the King's person, his table, nor his palace?" But argument was useless against the royal wish, and, realising this, in her closing words the high spirit of her race flashed out: "It is the office of you judges to protect innocence from injury. But if the malice and power of my enemies be such, that whether guilty or innocent I must needs be condemned, I shall die cheerfully, having the testimony of a good conscience: and, assure yourselves, you shall find it more easy to take away my life than to blast my reputation or to fix any real blot upon my memory."

The judges themselves were moved by her noble bearing and stirring appeal, and wavered for a little in their subservience to the King's will. They even

dared to approach His Majesty with a recommendation for the royal clemency being exercised, and one would have thought they were sure of a gracious hearing, for it was an hour of deepest sorrow in the palace. James's young queen, married scarce two months, was lying dead. But even such sorrow could not conquer life-long hate, and the King replied that the law must take its course. It was a dreadful law; for it enacted that *females of rank* who were found guilty of treason should be burned at the stake! And on Janet Douglas, Lady Glammis, this awful sentence was pronounced.

Quickly the last act in the tragedy was hurried on. On the Castle Hill, in the presence of a vast crowd of Edinburgh citizens, the victim of royal injustice and private malice was bound to the stake and the flame was lit. As the fire shot up, women sobbed and men cursed, but she who was the centre of the tragedy remained calm and heroic to the end, showing once again how a Douglas could die. One hopes she did not see her husband's face gazing in horror through his prison bars on the awful scene. It was either a refinement of cruelty or an unpardonable thoughtlessness that let him behold the spectacle, and it had a tragic sequel. Mad with grief, that very night he sought to escape, and was dashed lifeless at the foot of the Castle rock.

It is a grim memory of the old Castle, and leaves a dark stain on the record of King James V. When

it was too late he bitterly regretted the deed, and the confession of the informer that his witness had been false intensified his regret. But no sorrow could restore the dead to life, and to the end of James's days the burning of Lady Glammis must have lain a heavy burden on the royal conscience. Her prophetic words have proved true. No real blot rests upon her memory. It rests on the memory of the King.

SIXTH MEMORY

The Martyrdom of Dean Forret

A.D. 1539

ON the last day of February 1539 the old Castle looked down upon a strange, sad scene. The slopes below were dark with hurrying crowds of men eager to see a spectacle of a kind to which Edinburgh, fortunately, was comparatively strange. Church dignitaries and priests were there in unusual numbers, soldiers were much in evidence, and prominent among the spectators was Scotland's ruler, King James V. And king, soldiers, priests, and people had come to see—what?—The death at the stake of five good men whose crime was heresy!

The Castle Hill to-day has many monuments to gallant men who died in their country's cause. Perhaps some day a place may also be found for

a memorial to the five who died there so long ago for *Christ's* cause. Gallant and godly men they were, martyrs in the cause of Christian truth, and foremost of the five was Dean Thomas Forret, Canon of St Colme's and Vicar of Dollar.

Thomas Forret was one of the saintliest and best of the men whom Scotland produced in the days immediately before the Reformation. Sprung from a goodly stock, he was early destined for the Church, and while still a boy was sent to Cologne for his training. That period over, he returned to his native land, where a career of comfort and of promise was ready waiting him. But Providence had for him a very different future in store from that which he and his friends anticipated. Three episodes which stand out in the record of his manhood's life indicate how he ran in the race that ended on the Castle Hill.

The scene of the first episode is the old Abbey of St Colme, whose hoary ruin on the Island of Inchcolm is to-day one of the most picturesque features on the Firth of Forth. Then the Abbey was in full flood of life and prosperity, and when Forret was appointed to a canon's stall there, his career seemed secure and its course well-defined. But it chanced one day that, to end some disquieting investigations of the younger monks into the finances of the Abbey, the abbot directed them to study certain writings of St Augustine. It proved a blessed task for Forret. What Augustine's words

did for Luther, they did also for this young Scottish monk: they led him to his Saviour, and through the Saviour to the grace of God. Faith in Christ worked in him a change so great, that he straightway sought to share his joy with all his brother monks. But this brought trouble to the quiet monastery. Some of the younger brethren, indeed, responded, but "the old bottels," he said, "would not receave the new wine." So, to restore quiet the abbot, who had a kindly feeling for the young enthusiast, found for him another sphere of usefulness and appointed him Vicar of Dollar, which parochial charge was under the care of the Abbey.

In Dollar the most active and useful years of the young monk's life were spent, but if the abbot had hoped that any cooling off in zeal would result from the 'rustication' he must have been sadly disappointed. Away from the conservative thoughts and habits of the Abbey, Forret rapidly developed both in his religious ideas and activities. Probably no parish in Scotland was worked so thoroughly or on so original lines. He taught his flock the Ten Commandments; drew up a catechism of religious truth for the children to learn; was indefatigable in his study and in his parochial visiting; took interest in the secular welfare of the parish as shewn by building a much-needed bridge at his own charges (and which still bears the name "The Vicar's Bridge"), and by his unfailing charity and kindness

won all hearts. But most uncommon of all his clerical activities was his *preaching every Sunday* from the Gospel or the Epistle that fell to be read, "which then was a great novelty in Scotland to see any man preach except a Black Friar or a Grey Friar."

Such zeal raised up many enemies in his brethren in the Church whose lives and ways were very different. They resented especially his preaching and his practice of handing back to poor parishioners some of the harshest of the priestly dues, and ere long Dean Forret found himself called to appear before the Bishop of Dunkeld to give an account of his ways. The Bishop, however, was a kindly man, and was unwilling to press hardly on one whose faithful and devoted life he could not but recognise. "My Joy, Dean Thomas," he called him, and dismissed him with a caution to go more quietly and judiciously. "Go your way," said he, 'and let be all these phantasies; for if ye persevere in these erroneous opinions ye will repent *quhen ye may not mend it.*"

It was a true prophecy, and the third episode on the Castle Hill of Edinburgh was its fulfilment. The good vicar did not mend his ways, but persevered in them, and soon a harder and less sympathetic judge was called to pass sentence on him. This was Cardinal David Betoun, who had recently been created Cardinal by the Pope (1538), and was now

eager to show his loyalty to Rome. With him the reforming priest found a very short shrift, and the account that has come down to us of his examination shows that the Cardinal had an uncompromising reformer as well as a good man to deal with.

"Dar thou deny," he was asked, "... that thou gave again to thy parochinaris the cow and the upmaist cloths (*i.e.* the priest's dues after a death), saying thou haid no rycht to them?"

Dean Thomas. I gave them again to them that haid more need of them than I.

The Accuser. Thou fals Heretick! Thou learned all thy parochiners to say the Pater Noster, the Creed, and the Ten Commandments in English, which is contrary to our acts that they should know which we say.

Dean Thomas. Brother, my people are so rude and ignorant, they understand no Latin, so that my conscience moved me to pitie their ignorance, which provoked me learn them the words of their salvation in English, that is the Ten Commandments, which are the law of God, whereby they mycht observe the same. I teached them the Beleeff, whereby they mycht know their faith in God and Jesus Christ His Son, and His death and resurrection. Mairover, I teached the Lord's own prayer in the mother tongue, to the effect that they should know to whom they should pray, and what they should ask and desire in prayer, whilk I beleefe to be the pattern of all prayer."

It was a noble defence, but not one that was likely to have any great avail with a thorough-going Romanist like the Cardinal. And still less avail did it have when the accused proceeded to justify his cause by quoting from and producing the *English* New Testament, a forbidden book. That sealed his fate and hurried it on—death by fire on the Castle Hill.

Like John Knox, Dean Forret was blessed with a faithful servant, Andrew Kirke, who was with him to the last, and has left a brief record of how his master died. A Roman Catholic priest, Friar Arbuckle, sought to win him back to the Roman faith when he was bound to the stake.

"Say, I believe in God," said the Friar. "I believe in God," said he. "And in our Lady," said the Friar. "I believe as our Lady believeth," replied the dauntless martyr, adding, "Tempt me not! I know what I should say as well as you, thanks be to God!" Then, turning to the people, he tried to say a few parting words of counsel to them, but was prevented not only by the soldiers, but also by the people themselves, who had little wish to hear. "Burn him! burn him!" they cried. So the sad pyre was lighted. "God be merciful to me, a sinner!" the martyr was heard to pray. Then, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!" And from the midst of the smoke, while life lasted, he was heard sustaining his soul with the words of the fifty-first psalm, "Have

mercy on me, O Lord, according to Thy loving-kindness." But ever fainter grew the words, until at last they suddenly ceased. A cruel yet kindly hand had knocked aside the wooden block on which the martyr's feet were resting, when death, by strangulation, cut short the last agonies of death by fire. The soul of Thomas Forret was escaped out of the snare of the fowler and had reached its home.

SEVENTH MEMORY

The End of an Old Alliance

A.D. 1560

THE alliance of Scotland with France is an old story now, but age can never lessen its charm nor rob it of its interest. Rather does the interest in it seem to grow as the years pass, for not for many a day has the old friendship been so prominent a theme of speech and praise as in these present times. Yet it was always rather an *alliance* than a *friendship*. No doubt the two peoples liked each other sufficiently well, but it was not mere liking that drew them together and kept them together for some hundreds of years. That was due to their common fear of England, the "auld enemy" of each, and for Scotland at least this was an unstable foundation on which to frame a policy. For she and England were foreordained not to enmity but to friendship.

Sisters, and not bitter foes, Providence clearly meant them to be, and as soon as this purpose should begin to be worked out, the old alliance was bound to go; and in the year 1560 it went. The Reformation of the Church was the beginning of the process, and its culmination came when, on 11th June of that year, there died in Edinburgh Castle, Scotland's Queen-Regent, Mary of Guise and Lorraine.

Of the blood royal of France, a descendant of the great Charlemagne, and the widow of King James V. of Scotland, Mary of Guise has many titles to fame, but probably in the eyes of the Scottish people her strongest title lies in her being the mother of her still more famous daughter, Mary, Queen of Scots. King James had died in 1542, when only thirty years of age. Six years later the young Queen had been transferred to the safe refuge of France, and her mother, thus bereft alike of husband and child, stayed on in Scotland, a stranger in a strange land, to guard the kingdom for her daughter.

It was a long and arduous watch she set herself to keep, but she kept it faithfully, and, up to a certain point, with benefit to Scotland. For she was a great Queen, probably one of the ablest Scotland has ever had; but the times were unusually stormy, and an unhappy fate assigned her a place on the losing side. The country was rapidly embracing the reformed religion, and as alike by conviction and training

Mary of Guise was a devoted Roman Catholic, she could not be expected to look with any favour on the rising popular cause. Nor did she; but she was not intolerant, and had she been left to herself the country might have been spared the civil war of Reformation times. But behind the Queen Regent there was France, and France called for stern measures against the party of Reform, which were duly taken, and then came war.

Ten thousand French soldiers garrisoned Leith, and these—the finest troops of their day in Europe—amply sufficed to beat back the attacks of the undisciplined forces hastily marshalled by the Lords of the Congregation, as the leaders of the Protestant party were termed. It began to look as if not only Scotland's Church but Scotland herself was to be brought under the heel of France, and this was more than Scotland's southern neighbour could calmly brook. So with reluctance, but quite effectively, England now stepped into the fray, and to the hard-pressed forces of the Congregation some eight thousand English troops were added. Leith became the cockpit of Scotland for the time. Inside the walls were the Queen's party and the French; outside the walls the Reforming party and the English; and in all the country round was distress and irritation, for alike from French and English the rural peasantry suffered a deal. As wails a rhymer in that same fateful year, 1560:—

I cannot sing for the vexation
Of Frenchmen and the Congregation,
That has made trouble in the nation
 And mony a bair bigging.
I havena will to sing or dance
For fear of England and of France ;
God send them sorrow and mischance,
 In cause of their coming.

Unhappily at this critical moment the Queen-Regent's health broke down. A disease which had long been sapping her strength rapidly developed, and she found herself compelled to seek refuge and rest in Edinburgh Castle. The Castle, however, was not in her own power. Before the civil strife broke out it had been entrusted by the Scottish Parliament to the hands of Lord Erskine, and with a stern fidelity to his trust he kept the citadel a neutral fortress so long as the strife continued. French and English, Queen and Congregation tried in vain to win the Castle and its commander to their side. All such overtures met with a blunt refusal, and when attacks were made they were invariably repelled. Yet, when the stricken Queen came and asked for *refuge*, the gates were opened, and she and her small retinue passed in to what was to be the last resting-place she would ever need. It was truly a strange condition of affairs. Two miles north of the capital, on the plain around its chief seaport, Scotland's battles were being fought, and her destinies decided largely by foreign troops, while her legiti-

mate ruler, deposed from her regency by the voice of the majority of the nobles, seeks a place of refuge in which to die, and finds it in a royal castle which yet is neutral ground.

It was on 1st April 1560 that the Castle welcomed her, and so long as her little strength held out she used to climb to the top of David's Tower, and looking out towards Leith, try to see how things were faring there. The distance was too great to discern anything save the larger movements of the opposing forces, but the figure of the lonely woman, stricken and dying, gazing from the ramparts of the Castle on a hopeless fight, is one that holds the imagination. For the fight was hopeless. Ever and again the French made brilliant sorties, but only to be driven back. Then English ships sailed up the Firth and closed in the town from the sea. Provisions ran so short that the garrison was reduced to feed on horseflesh, and it became clear to all that the struggle, however prolonged, could have but one end. But ere that hour arrived the Queen's own end had come.

Her malady, which was of the nature of dropsy, now grew rapidly worse, and in the beginning of June, realising the nearness of the end, she begged that she might have an interview with the leading nobles of the Congregation. And on 10th June they came—the Duke of Chatelherault and the Earls of Argyle, Glencairn, and Marischal,—and strong, hard

men though they were, their hearts melted as they looked on the sufferings and heard the words of the dying Regent. For they were truly queenly words. She had been blamed for cherishing an undue love of France.

"For my own part," she said, "I did ever favour the weal of the realm of Scotland (as well as France), by reason I had the honour to be Queen Regent thereof, and my daughter heritable Queen of the same; and if ever I did or attempted anything which appeared to the nobles contrary to this declaration, I affirm that it has been from lack of wisdom, not from want of love."

Some wise counsels followed, to the effect that they should dismiss both French and English troops from Scottish soil, and after pleading for loyal service to her daughter, she took a tearful farewell, kissing them each in turn, and beseeching them "to forgive her everything wherein she had displeased them since her arrival in Scotland," and assuring them "that she did from her heart pardon all that had been done against her."

It was a noble farewell, and it was not heard unmoved. With a kind anxiety for her welfare the nobles urged her to receive the ministrations of a Reformed minister ere she died, and though the suggestion was one which spoke more for the warmth of their convictions than for their Christian charity, the dying Queen consented, and Willock, the co-

reformer of Knox, came and spoke with her of things eternal. Happily he was of a gentler spirit than the great Reformer, but one regrets to read that he thought the occasion suitable to speak to her of the "vanity and abominations of the Mass." It was surely not the time for that, and we do not wonder that Mary of Guise kept silent. Her silence then was more Christian than the minister's speech. He was on better ground when he spoke of Christ's all-sufficing death, and there the dying Queen and he were at one. "Yea," she said, "there is no salvation but through the death of Jesus Christ."

Next day she died, having lived in Scotland two and twenty years. From the day she landed, to marry its young and gallant King, she had never left its shores. Fair France had been seen only in her dreams, and of these she had many; but now that she was dead, it was decreed that there her body should be laid to rest. The intolerance of Scotland was the cause of this far-away burial, for in the country over which she lately ruled the full rites of Roman sepulture were now forbidden, and for some four months the body of the dead Queen, encased in lead, lay in the Chapel Royal within the Castle precincts. Then the peace arrangements having been concluded, the royal remains were conveyed to Leith, and thence to France, where, with all the ceremonies of her Church and in the presence of her sorrowing daughter, they were laid

to rest in the choir of the Benedictine Abbey of Rheims.

Hers was a life that ended in failure, for with her death the cause she had sought to keep alive died too. The soldiers of France said farewell to Scotland, and the old alliance as a factor in the life of the two nations came to an end. Henceforth it was a sentiment rather than a force. But in its place there arose a new alliance, which has developed since then into an inviolable union, and when the dying Queen looked out from the Castle wall in that summer of 1560 she saw its first beginnings. For she witnessed before the walls of Leith what the world had never seen before, the soldiers of Scotland and England not facing each other in deadly strife, but fighting side by side against a common foe. It was a sign to her who saw it, and to the world, that for Scotland old things had passed away and a new day had dawned.

EIGHTH MEMORY

The Castle and Queen Mary

A.D. 1561-1567

IT is with Holyrood far more than with the Castle that the memory of Mary is imperishably linked. Yet the Castle has memories too of Scotland's famous and unfortunate Queen which are well worth cherishing, and of these there are at least three which do not yield in importance even to the stirring memories of Holyrood.

The first concerns 2nd September 1561. A fortnight earlier the fair girl Queen—she was only nineteen years old—had landed at the port of Leith and proceeded to Holyrood, but Edinburgh, the capital of her realm, had not yet been entered, nor had the grey old fortress which keeps watch over the city opened its gates to receive its sovereign. But now all preparations for a right royal welcome had been completed, and with a pomp and colour

which to-day we never rival, the state entry of the Queen took place. The Castle was her first objective, where the Scottish nobles were assembled to receive her; later on the civic welcome was to follow.

Leaving Holyrood, the royal procession swept along the line of what is now Princes Street, and, skirting the end of the loch, seems to have reached the Castle by a steep ascent, traces of which are now obliterated. In the Banqueting Hall a royal banquet was waiting, but one may be sure that the Queen's first thoughts were of other things than festivities. The Castle was to her a place of hallowed association, for every stone spoke to her of the loving mother from whom she had been parted while yet a child, and whose love had continued steadfast to the last. It was here that the last letter received from that dear hand had been penned; here the long watch which for her sake her mother had kept had come to an end—the watch because of which Scotland was hers to-day; here her mother had died. To Mary it was holy ground, but it was inspiring ground as well; and as on that bright September day she looked out on the glorious stretch of sea, and hill, and plain, the young Queen must have felt it was a joy to live and reign over a land so fair and a people so enthusiastically loyal.

For they were all loyal that day—at least as far as she could see. With loyal acclamations the

nobles drank her health in the Banqueting Hall, and it was with almost extravagant loyalty that the citizens greeted her when, the banquet over, the cannon pealed out a royal salute, and in the midst of a dazzling retinue she rode down the Castle Hill.

Light on her airy steed she sprung,
Around her golden tassels hung,
No chieftain there rode half so free
Or half so light or gracefully.

A sight so fair on Scotland's plain
A Scot shall never see again.

Clad in crimson and velvet there marched by her side sixteen of the leading citizens, eight of them in turn supporting a canopy of velvet over her head; and scarce had she left the Castle when fifty of the city's youth, disguised as blackamoors, met her, and bowing down before her, acknowledged themselves her slaves; rings in their mouths and chains of gold on their legs and arms quaintly vouching for their willing servitude. A little farther on, near the spot where now stands the Hall of the General Assembly, the crowning episode of the day took place, long remembered for its unaccustomed pageantry. There a great archway had been erected, on which were grouped a number of children, who sang in the "maist heavenly wyse"; and as the Queen drew near there descended a globe or cloud, which opened and revealed "a bonnie bairne, as if it had been ane angel, who deliverit to her

Hieness ye keys of ye town, together with ane Bible and Psalm Buke, covered with fine purpour velvet."

It was a triumph of art for Edinburgh, and the city appreciated it quite as much as did the Queen. The people were delirious in their rejoicings. The fountains spurted forth wine; all along the High Street the citizens cheered continuously, pride in their beautiful young Queen and hope for the good time coming being uppermost in well-nigh every heart. And she, the centre of it all, shared in the prevailing joy. The old city grew young that day, and both city and Queen rejoiced in their youth and in the hopes which youth engenders.

When next the Castle comes into prominence in Queen Mary's life, five stirring years have passed away, and 19th June 1566 has arrived—a day of much importance, not to Mary only, but to Scotland and England too. It is early forenoon, and the Castle guns are booming out a message of joy to the listening city; the kirk bells in Edinburgh, and in every town and village where the sound is heard ring out a merry clang, and when night comes on bonfires are to gleam from Arthur's Seat, the Calton Hill, and every height around. And all for what? Because up in the Castle yonder a little prince has been born, and the young Queen has been spared to experience a mother's joy and cherish a mother's hopes.

When princes are expected their birth becomes a national concern. It is one of the penalties that royal mothers have to pay for their exalted position, and Mary paid it in her turn. Bitter days had recently been passed through, and some wild, cruel deeds had been done. Rizzio had been slain before her eyes, and between her and Darnley, the King, there was now in consequence a sharp antagonism. So for safety's sake her Council directed the Queen to take up her residence in the Castle until the expected heir should arrive.

The little room where, tradition says, the birth took place—a tradition, be it said, not unchallenged, the honour being claimed by some for the larger room adjoining—is one of the sights of the Castle still. Very small and unpretending it is, in view of the great issues which were there decided and the touching memories which it enshrines, but the Royal initials I.R. and M.R. on the ceiling, and the Royal arms on the wall warn us that here we tread on no common ground, and the quaint verse written underneath, dating from Mary's time, reminds us of wherein lies its title to fame.

Lord Jesu Chryst, that crownit was with Thornse,
Preserve the Birth, quhais Badgie heir is borne,
And send Hir Sonne successione, to Reigne stille
Lang in this Realme, if that it be Thy will ;
Als grant, O Lord, quhat ever of Hir proceed
Be to Thy Honor, Glorie, and Praise ; Sobied.

To this room in the afternoon of the eventful day came Darnley—he doubtful of his reception, and she perhaps doubtful too, but at the touch of a little child the discord between the two was silenced.

"My lord," said the Queen, "God has given to you and me a son."

And Darnley, moved for the moment by feelings higher than his poor soul was wont to entertain, asked forgiveness for the past, and bending down, kissed the babe as it nestled in its mother's arms. The little room became a chamber of reconciliation. Then Mary's thoughts took a wider sweep, and looking on the babe's face, she saw in him the reconciler of a yet greater breach.

"This is the Prince," she said, "who I hope shall first unite the two kingdoms of England and Scotland."

It was a great hope, and in due time it was fulfilled, for the little babe there born proved to be the link that more than any other helped to make Scotland and England one. But for that birth, indeed, it is hard to say how our national story might have run. Certain it is that its channel would have differed widely from that in which it has since then flowed. That little child grew to be King James VI. of Scotland and I. of England, and though the country of his birth has little cause to be proud of him, both Scotland and England have reason to remember his coming with thank-

fulness, and to cherish a special reverence for the room where first he saw the light.

When again Queen Mary sought the shelter of the Castle, dark clouds had gathered about her path, the darkest, alas, being of her own making. Scarce a year has passed since the birth of the child of so many hopes, but in its deeds and consequences it was the blackest year of any that Mary ever saw. Within eight months of his reconciliation with the Queen, Darnley had been foully murdered, and from the hour of his death his widow gave freest rein to her mad infatuation for the Earl of Bothwell, one of the chief of his murderers. Nothing could stay her on her downward course. She was *fey*; and when on 24th April she let herself be led by Bothwell, a not unwilling captive, to his Castle of Dunbar, the depth of her folly, if not her shame, was reached. Twelve days later, on the 6th of May 1567, he brought her to Edinburgh for the marriage, now inevitable; but the hearts of her people had been sore abased, and in their shame and anger it was hard to say what they might not now do to her they had once so idolised. Only in the Castle would she be safe, and the Castle was in the hands of one of Bothwell's friends, so to the Castle the poor, misguided young Queen was brought.

Up the High Street she rode, with a strong

guard of Bothwell's followers surrounding her, and false Bothwell himself at her bridle rein; but it was a sad, sad ride—a pitiful contrast to her first ride there. No cheers or loyal pageant to-day, no smiling faces or glad hurrahs, but closed doors, averted faces, and a chill silence that was itself a judgment. A salvo of artillery welcomed her when she reached the citadel, but that was a poor substitute for the welcome of her subjects which she had so madly forfeited. For five days the Castle sheltered her, until Bothwell's divorce from his wife should be obtained, and so the way be made clear for the fatal marriage, and then the last visit of Mary, Queen of Scots, to Edinburgh Castle came to an end. The gates swung open, the guns boomed out a farewell, and down the street to Holyrood she rode to take the step full soon repented of, and afterwards so bitterly atoned for.

NINTH MEMORY

The Last Stand for Queen Mary

A.D. 1573.

BOOM!

It was six o'clock on New Year's morning 1573, and the citizens of Edinburgh roused themselves from their sleep as one of the Castle guns sounded out this warning note. If any did not understand its meaning they soon learned, for after a brief pause there followed the discharge not of a single gun but of a whole battery, and leaden messengers came whistling down the Lawnmarket, crashing into the barricades which had there been recently erected. It was the signal to all that the brief truce had ended, and the final act in the great siege had begun. The long fight between Queen's men and King's men was now to be fought to a finish.

In the Castle the last stand was being made for

Queen Mary. Five years had passed away since, fleeing from the disastrous field of Langside, Mary had sought refuge in England only to find a prison ; and though for a time her Scottish supporters, ever hoping for her return, had striven to maintain her cause, little by little their numbers had lessened, their enthusiasm had languished, and the cause had grown more desperate, until now, on this New Year's day, there remained in all Scotland only one spot where the Queen's flag was still unfurled and the Queen's liegemen still were true. But that spot was the central citadel of the land, the Castle of Edinburgh, and on the brave men who held it for their Queen the eyes of Scotland, England, and France alike were fixed.

To all appearance it was a hopeless struggle they were maintaining ; yet in war many a cause that has looked hopeless has come out victorious in the end and there were not wanting grounds for hoping for such an issue here. There were first and chiefly the men themselves, a brave band of the best fighting material Scotland held, with, at their head, Kirkaldy of Grange, the first soldier of his day, and Maitland, of Lethington, unrivalled as a statesman, a man with a keen mind and "a fell tongue," one who was ever ready for any emergency. Then there was the well-nigh impregnable position of the Castle, against which all assaults that Scotland could bring had hitherto proved vain. And there was, last of all, the

encouraging experience of the past two years. For ever since April 1571 when Kirkaldy had closed the gates and declared for Queen Mary, the Castle had been more or less besieged. But all attempts to take it had failed ; and not only so, but the garrison had routed the besiegers, and had made themselves the masters of the city. King's men and leading citizens of the Reforming party had fled to Leith, and the gay life of pre-Reformation times had been resumed. With experiences like these behind them, it was permissible for the garrison to hope against hope, and not altogether inexcusable that they should keep up the fight as long as ever they could. One never knew when *something* might happen in the outside world that would alter the whole aspect of affairs ; it needed only the death of an English queen or a Scottish king or regent, and then, if the Castle still were held in her name, Queen Mary would the more readily come to her own again. So they fought on.

But their task was now much harder than it had been, for they had an abler foe to fight against. In the previous November the Earl of Morton had been chosen Regent, one of the most feared and least loved men in Scotland, and not without cause, but none the less a man of strength and ability and relentless determination in gaining his end ; and the end he set before him now was the capture of the Castle and the ruin of Mary's cause.

At first he tried to gain his purpose by negotiations, but as these involved the complete abandonment of the Queen, Kirkaldy, backed by Maitland, rejected his proposals with disdain. Equal non-success attended overtures which were put forth in a different spirit by one whose every deed is of interest to Scotsmen—John Knox. The aged Reformer was dying, and as in the old days Kirkaldy had been his friend, he sent him from his sick-bed a touching message.

“Go,” he said to Mr David Lindsay, the minister of Leith, “to yonder man in the Castle, whom you know I have loved so dearly, and tell him that I have sent you yet once more to warn him, in the name of God, to leave that evil cause and give over that Castle; and gif he will not, neither the scraggy rock in which he miserably confides, nor the carnal prudence of that man (Lethington) whom he esteems a demi-god, nor the assistance of strangers shall preserve him, but he shall be disgracefully dragged fra his nest to punishment, and hung on a gallows against the face of the sun.”

But the stern though well-meant message failed. “Weill,” said Knox when he was told, “I have been earnest with my God anent they twa men. For the ane I am sorry that so it should befall him, yet God assures me that there is mercy for his soul; for that other I haif na warrand that ever he sal be weill.” Neither old friendship nor prophetic warning, any

more than political intrigue, could move the gallant leaders in the Castle from their loyalty to their exiled Queen. So the siege went on to the bitter end.

The closing act of the long conflict was marked by two stages, the first of which lasted for three months. From January to March Morton put forth every effort in his power to take the Castle, but there was not in Scotland the necessary artillery to ensure success, and without that the bravest assault was fruitless. The honours remained with the besieged garrison, at whose hand, both by fire and shot, the city suffered severely, and it became abundantly clear that against such force as *Scotland* could bring, the Castle was impregnable. So *England's* aid was asked—and granted. Not unwillingly indeed, for it involved a breach of the law of nations, which forbade one power to interfere in the domestic broils of another, but Elizabeth's hostility to Mary bore down all scruples, and the fate of the Castle was sealed.

The English aid arrived at Edinburgh in March. It was a large force, consisting of 1500 arquebusiers, 140 pikemen, and a great train of artillery, all being under the command of Sir William Drury, a tried and capable soldier. A last summons to surrender was sent to the Castle, but with no result save the hoisting of a red flag of defiance on David's Tower; so the guns were got into position for their deadly

work. In all twenty great guns were "stellit" at different points round the doomed citadel. Five were planted on the Castle Hill, five on the other side of the Nor' Loch (where Princes Street now runs), five more near the West Port, and five in Greyfriars Churchyard, this last battery being the special charge of the Regent himself.

On 17th May the guns began to speak, and as the shot crashed against the walls of David's Tower a great shriek went up from the women in the Castle, which told the besiegers that they were not shooting in vain. But the defenders were not idle. Their ammunition was running low, but Mons Meg and the many smaller guns upon the walls gave deadly reply, and for a whole week the firing was incessant. Then, however, the heavier ordnance of the English began to tell. On 23rd May David's Tower—that conspicuous feature of the Castle which has never been replaced—came crashing down "with a hideous noyse, laying its airy head on the ground, leaving the defendants naked to the enemies' fury." Next day the Gate Tower, the Portcullis, and Wallace's Tower also crumbled into dust. Other portions of the wall followed, and soon the whole fortifications were little else than a mass of ruins, leaving the Castle open to the first vigorous assault.

Further defence was hopeless, and recognising that surrender had become imperative, Kirkaldy asked for a brief truce until conditions of surrender should

be arranged. All he stipulated for was that the lives of all the garrison be spared. It was not much to ask in view of the heroic defence they had maintained. But it was too much for the Regent. His hour of vengeance had arrived, and he was resolved to use it. All lives, *except nine of the leaders*, he agreed to spare, but these were doomed. Such terms could not be accepted, and Kirkaldy broke off the negotiations, resolved to fight to the end—and die. But his followers were of another mind, and refused to second their leader's desperate purpose. Nor can we wonder. They had fought as few men fight. The cause was lost, and they would fight no more. Surrender he must, they told him, and that within six hours, else they would hang the Secretary (Lethington) over the walls as the source of all their misery.

There was nothing left for the gallant leader but to yield, and on the morning of the 29th of May he gave up his sword and the Castle, not, however, to the Scottish Regent, but to the English Commander, hoping that as prisoners of a foreign sovereign he and his companions might meet with more honourable treatment than they could look for from the fierce and hated Morton. But the hope proved vain.

Prisoners of the English they indeed remained for a short time, and as such were marched down the Castle Hill, surrounded by an English guard, and

lodged in the quarters of the English general. But Morton's lust for their blood was too keen to go unsatisfied, and the reception which the populace of Edinburgh gave the gallant leaders as they were led down the street showed that Morton's lust was the people's lust too. "Whaur are they?" cried the mob. "Let us see the louns! Staen them! Let them tak' na rest!" Backed by the popular rage, Morton demanded from Elizabeth the lives her general held in trust, and Elizabeth, not strong enough or not anxious enough to resist the demand, gave orders that the shameful surrender should be made. Lethington, fortunately for himself, had died in prison ere the fatal order was received, and so escaped the last humiliation. But the brave Kirkaldy, less fortunate, was handed over into the power of his enemy, and on 3rd August died on the scaffold at the Cross of Edinburgh. Nor did the humiliation end with death, for, following the barbarous custom of the time, his head was severed from his body and impaled for all to see on the walls of the very Castle he had so nobly defended. As said a halting rhymer of the day:—

Then was compleat the prophecy of Knox,
Down fra that craig Kirkaldy sal reteir
With shame and slander, like ane huntit fox.

To Mary, in her English prison, the tidings of the Castle's fall and the death of her loyal supporters

were carried by a messenger from Elizabeth. It meant the ruin of her dearest hopes, but she bore the tidings well. "She makes little show of any grief," wrote the one who told the news, "*and yet it nips her very near.*" Truly it did, and we may be sure that though the lips kept a brave silence the heart was crying out all the time. No sorer blow could ever befall her, for it was the final severing of the tie between her and her lost kingdom. Many years of life lay yet before her, and in these there came times of hope as well as of despair, but such hopes were English in their origin, and in England they found their grave. Scotland's interest in her fair and unfortunate Queen largely ceased on that day when the Castle walls crumbled into dust before the English guns, and Mary's flag came fluttering to the ground.

TENTH MEMORY

A Royal Witch-Hunter

A.D. 1591

B EYOND having been born in the Castle of Edinburgh, His Gracious Majesty King James VI. has little other association with Scotland's great fortress. Neither of it nor of Edinburgh itself does he seem to have been overfond. Yet there is a series of episodes which closely link his name with the Castle precincts, if not with the Castle itself, and have preserved for future ages the memory of a regrettable but highly characteristic feature of his reign. In his own day he was dubbed "the wisest fool in Christendom," and the episodes referred to support the title. They occurred in the year 1591, when, at the King's direct instigation, divers unfortunate men and women perished at the stake, outside the Castle walls, having been found guilty of the *crime of witchcraft*.

That crime has now been banished from the penal

code of every civilised nation. But in the sixteenth century, and for long after, it was a crime which every year sent thousands of innocent people to their death. Call a woman a 'witch' to-day, and men smile a pitying smile and say, "She had better be sent to the asylum"; call a woman a 'witch' in those old days, and men did not smile—they shuddered, and sent her to the stake. They believed, with the most intense conviction, that a definite compact had been made between such abandoned ones and the devil; that they had sold to him their souls for all eternity, and in return had been endowed by him with diabolic power which enabled them to inflict hurt, disaster, and death on whomsoever they pleased. They were thus the enemies of God and man, and wherever found were rightfully doomed to death. In every country in Europe this was the fixed belief and the logical practice. But in Scotland the belief went deeper, and the practice was more sternly logical than elsewhere, for which unenviable distinction our country had largely to thank her King.

The royal interest in witches had a curious origin. It sprang from the difficulties that attended his marriage with Princess Anne of Denmark. The wedding was to have taken place in Scotland, but a succession of violent storms drove back the vessel in which the bride was being conveyed, and in his impatience James took ship himself, braved the

stormy deep, landed in Denmark, and, bearing away his bride, arrived at Leith, on 1st May 1590. That the inconvenient storms should be set down to the malice of witches was only to be expected, and in so thinking the young King was only doing as most other men did. But it happened that circumstances occurred at that time which enabled him to identify the witches concerned, and this success it was that turned him into the 'witch-specialist,' which he afterwards became.

In the village of Tranent, some ten miles from Edinburgh, a servant girl, Geilie Duncan, who had shown much success in curing man and beast of various illnesses, was suspected by her master of being in league with the devil. Promptly he put her to the torture of the thumb-screw, and in her pain she confessed that what he suspected was all true, and gave the names of four others who were her associates. These were John Fian, the schoolmaster at Prestonpans; Agnes Sampson, the "wise wife of Keith"; Barbara Napier, wife of an Edinburgh citizen; and Euphame M'Calycan, a lady of good social standing in Edinburgh. Information of this diabolic league was lodged at once with the Privy Council, and all five were arrested and subjected to examination, which in those days meant by torture. Alike at the examination and at the torture King James was present. And truly he heard strange things, which cannot be wondered at when the brutal nature of the torture is considered. The

binding and tightening of a twisted cord round the forehead—a specially Scottish device—was bad enough, but there was much worse. Of Fian we are told that "his nails were torn away with pincers, needles were thrust up to the head in his fingers, while his legs were crushed in 'the boots' until the blood and marrow spouted forth." Treatment, as cruel, was also inflicted on the women, and under it 'confessions' were abundant and detailed.

Two points especially emerged. One was that meetings of the devil and his slaves were frequent, the favourite rendezvous being the Kirk of North Berwick, and by both Fian and Agnes Sampson full particulars of this "Devil's Parliament" were given. They told how "the devil started up in the pulpit like ane muckle black man, and callit every ane by his or her name, and they answered 'Here, Master.'" Prior to each assembly a revel was said to have been held in the churchyard, when "the witches took hands and danced a reel to the music of Geilie Duncan's Jew's trump"; and of the unholy gathering many other particulars were given, which are all gravely set down in the records of the investigation.

"A black tom-cat for bethral stood,
And the foul fiend took the chair.

Hech ! sirs, but we had grand fun
Wi' the muckle black deil in the chair,
And the muckle Bible upside doon
A' gangin withershins roun' and roun'
And backward saying the prayer."

All this was more than enough to seal the fate of any number of witches, but the climax of their iniquity was reached when they confessed what had been one of the main topics of discussion at these midnight meetings. It had been the destruction of the King and the thwarting of his marriage plans! Fian told how, when they knew that the Queen had sailed from Denmark, the whole company of the witches and warlocks had gone out to sea, sailing through the air in sieves or riddles, and had raised the storm that drove the royal ship back to port. And Agnes Sampson confessed to a second attempt of the kind made when King James was coming home triumphant, and was only one day's sail from Leith. "They had put to sea that day and threw a cat into the water, pronouncing at the same time an invocation to the devil. This was intended to raise such a storm that the vessel would be wrecked and the King drowned." King James gravely confirmed this, as his vessel had at that time been much perturbed. But the attempt failed, and the witches flew back to the land to consult the devil. "Why," they asked, "can we not have power over the King?"

And Satan was fain to confess, "Because he is such a good man, I have no power over him!" One might have thought that so adroit a tribute would have induced the King to show mercy to those who paid it. But in the judgment of the day the crime

was too serious for pardon, and *death by fire*, on the Castle Hill, was the sentence passed.

In the beginning of January 1591 Fian suffered ; a little later in the month Agnes Sampson followed him to the stake, death, by strangulation, having been in her case inflicted prior to the torch being applied ; and not long afterwards two others suffered in the same awful way. And on all the deaths the Castle walls looked down, and the men who thronged the walls and saw the smoke ascending, while they shuddered at the sight, thought the doom well earned, and gave thanks to God that Satan had been checkmated.

And were their thoughts not justified ? For had not the witches made full confession ? That is the strangest, most puzzling feature of all, that these five unfortunates, and thousands of other poor men and women in those days, confessed to crimes and deeds they never could have wrought, and to intercourse with the devil they never could have held ! That many who so confessed were simply lunatics is certain, for like vain imaginations are common with lunatics still. And in an age when belief in such supernatural doings was universal and profound, the thoughts of those who were bereft of reason would naturally incline that way, when confessions of what they thought might be would become confessions of what actually had been. But the torture which was inflicted accounts for much. To end

the awful agony many would confess anything, and beyond a doubt many did, though of a surety when the torture was over there would rise, in the mind of some who had 'confessed,' a great wonder at the mysterious deeds they had never known and yet had admitted.

But what if it all was a dream
Of things I had heard before,
And I only said what they wished to be said
When they twisted the cord round my old grey head,
Till flesh could bear no more?

It is a cruel time to which this "Castle Memory" takes us back, and all the sadder because this special cruelty was the result of ignorance, and therefore much more likely to spread, which it did; for the royal interest in the extirpation of witchcraft kindled a zeal for the cause which lasted in Scotland for more than a hundred years. Five hundred victims was the average yearly toll for many a day, and not till 1722 did the hateful practice end and the superstition die. Sometimes we think with longing of the "good old days," but when we remember such things as these, we may well give thanks that our lives are being lived in better times.

ELEVENTH MEMORY

The Castle and the Covenant

A.D. 1640

THE early part of the year 1640 was an anxious time in Edinburgh, for the struggle between King and Covenant was in progress, and to both parties the Castle of Scotland's capital had become an object of desire. Two years previously, when the breach with King Charles began, a well-planned surprise by the men of the Covenant had wrested the citadel from the possession of a slender royal garrison and given it into the keeping of the national party. Since then, however, the King had learned a few things; and on his promising to let Scotland settle her own ecclesiastical affairs, peace had been made between him and his subjects, and the Castle had been restored to the royal power.

But it was a hollow promise and a hollow peace; and of this the citizens of Edinburgh were soon convinced. Fifteen men had been all the strength

of the Castle's former garrison, but now three hundred soldiers were quartered in the fortress, and the command entrusted to the capable hands of Sir Patrick Ruthven, a veteran soldier trained in the wars of the Swedish King, Gustavus Adolphus. General Ruthven was a man who might be relied on to do all that bravery and skill could achieve, and very soon he showed, by his activity in putting the Castle in a complete state of defence, that he thought the day of battle was not far off. The fortifications were repaired with feverish haste, and, by the King's authority, the help of the citizens themselves in the work was demanded. It was, however, very sparingly given, if at all.

On the contrary, the citizens on their side began to get ready for the coming struggle, and were as fortunate as the King in drawing an able leader from the veterans of Gustavus Adolphus. Thousands of Scots had fought under that hero king, but on the dark clouds of war rising over their native land many had hastened back to strike a blow for the cause they deemed the right, some for the King, but more for the Covenant.

Home with old Leslie,
All covered with scars,
They came to take part
In the Covenant wars.

And it was "Old Leslie" himself, or Sir Alexander Leslie of Leven, who, as leader of the forces of the

Covenant, was now to be pitted against his former comrade, the Commander of the Castle. With equal strenuous activity did he direct the operations in the city in view of the coming siege. An observant writer, who was living at the time, has recorded how a strong watch of about four hundred men nightly invested the approaches to the Castle. "They raise fortifications to defend the town against the violence of the Castle. They raise 'midding mounts' upon the causeway (of the Lawnmarket), and fill up sundry houses (on the Castle Hill) with sand and water to resist fireworks; they set their engine to do what could be done to resist and withstand the firing of the Castle cannon *if it occurred.*"

And it did occur—as everybody knew it would. King Charles I. threw off the mask and declared war against his Scottish subjects, whereon the fight for the Castle commenced in earnest. More 'midding mounts' were raised, and on "ilk ane of their mounts were styled cannons for pursuit of the Castle." The cannon had been brought from Holland, and when erected at the following points—the Castle Hill, Greyfriars' Churchyard, beyond St Cuthbert's Kirk, and on the north side of the Nor' Loch (now Princes Street)—they formed an iron ring, from which, on 10th June, rounds of shot were vomited forth upon the Castle. The Castle guns made good reply, but "did no great skaith" except to the houses of the city, which suffered a good deal of damage.

Just as little skaith, however, was done to the Castle by the besieger's guns from the 'midding mounts,' for it is recorded how the gunners at one of the batteries "not only missed the Castle, but the whole rock." Accuracy in artillery fire was evidently not a strong point on either side; and after much fruitless pounding, General Leslie resolved to try direct assault. This was not an easy task. Stretching eastward from the Castle, over what is now the Esplanade, was what was known as the Spur, a triangular fortified enclosure, across the inner base of which ran yet another wall. In all, three walls had to be surmounted or three gateways forced, before the Castle could be entered. The first attempt was made on 13th July, and proved a complete failure. "There was great bickering" on that day "betwixt the Castle and the town. Ten town's soldiers were slain at the entry of the outer gate, and other ten within the entry gate, and their dead bodies thrown over the Castle wall, to the great terror of the town's people—besides many other sore hurt."

To undermine the Spur was Leslie's next device, and after much labour a mine was laid and sprung with good effect. A gaping breach appeared in the south-east corner of the outer fortifications, but when the besiegers looked through the opening the prospect was far from inviting. From the inner wall, yet intact, a cannon pointed direct on the

passage through the breach, and near the gun was seen General Ruthven, grimly waiting. It was an avenue of death they looked upon, yet there were not wanting men to tread it. With Somerville of Drum at their head (another 'Gustavus Adolphus' veteran), one hundred and eighty-five men dashed forward into the jaws of death. Like the Light Brigade at Balaclava,

Their's not to reason why,
Their's but to do—and die.

Their bravery was magnificent, but the order that called for its exercise was surely a blunder. The gun belched forth its fire, and from the walls poured down a rain of bullets. It was a massacre. Of the hundred and eighty-five men who entered the breach there were only thirty-three who trod the deadly avenue to the end, and these sought shelter from the leaden storm by crouching close to the inner wall. Among them was Somerville, sorely wounded.

All danger to the Castle being ended, the fire of the garrison ceased, and General Ruthven looked down from the wall upon the shattered remnant of his assailants, now completely at his mercy. It was one of several occasions in the siege when old comradeship told with good effect. In Somerville, Ruthven recognised a former fellow-soldier, and could not resist giving him some wise counsel, blended, however, with chivalrous mercy.

"Somerville," he said, "you have exposed yourself and your men to sure destruction, and for this, my old comrade, General Leslie is to blame. Under favour of my cannon, I beg you to go back, for I have no pleasure in the death of brave men." The offer was a knightly one, and was readily accepted by the stricken band of survivors.

This experience put an end to all endeavours to take the Castle by assault, and the slower, but less dangerous, method of blockade was adopted in its stead. The garrison was to be starved into surrender. Already the pinch of famine was being felt, and deaths from scurvy were known to be increasingly numerous. So the Covenanters quietly waited the certain issue. But they had to wait a while. Ruthven's hope was in reinforcements from King Charles; but as the weeks passed without sign of any such help, and the slender store of food and water grew ever smaller, while the death-roll from disease was steadily added to, the brave old soldier had to bend to circumstances which no bravery could conquer. "Finding victuals grow scant," writes the watchful chronicler, "having neither water, wine, beer, nor ale that could last long, he resolved to seek a parley by drum."

The Covenanters were not hard to parley with. The fierce bitterness which marked the later stages of the struggle between Covenant and King had not yet developed, and brave men on either side

were prompt in appreciating the bravery of their opponents. No doubt, too, old comradeship weighed now with Leslie, as it had done before with Ruthven. It was a surrender with the honours of war that Ruthven offered. He would give up the Castle upon condition that "he and his soldiers should go out honourably, carrying colours, burning matches, tuck of drum, with bag and baggage, and to march frae the Castle down through the town in good order and array."

To Leslie's and the Covenanters' honour the terms, so well merited, were at once agreed to, and on 18th September, amid accompaniments creditable to both, the last act in the siege took place. In the Banqueting Hall a right royal banquet was served and partaken of, with the utmost cordiality, by the officers of both parties, who with true soldierly spirit let enmity die as soon as peace had been declared. That banquet, with its good fellowship, made a pleasant close to what had been a bloody struggle, and forms still one of the most pleasing of the many memories of the grand old hall. No particulars of the table-talk of that day have come down to us, but it is safe to say that with discussions of the events just over, there mingled many memories of the great days when, under the Swedish King, those who had lately been besieged and besiegers had fought side by side.

The banquet ended, the evacuation of the Castle

followed, and as the citizens looked on the haggard little band that were given honourable escort down the High Street, and all the way to Leith, they must have felt that they were looking on a company of heroes. Of the original garrison of three hundred, only seventy men were left. The others had all died—some in action, many from wounds, but by far the most from disease. Ruthven, the gallant commander, being too weak and ill to stand, was obliged to head the procession in a carriage, behind which marched the seventy men and some thirty women—the worn and haggard survivors of the five months' siege. At Leith a royal vessel was waiting to convey them to England, to the side of the master they had served so well, and in this Ruthven and his noble hundred set sail. All for which they had contended had been lost. The banner of the Covenant now floated from the Castle wall, where once had been the standard of the King. But honour had been right well maintained ; and while their regret over the issue of the struggle must have been keen, they surely found some consolation in remembering that it was to *Scots* they had surrendered, and not to men of foreign race.

TWELFTH MEMORY

The Castle and Oliver Cromwell

A.D. 1650

News of battle ! news of battle !
Hark ! 'tis ringing down the street.

IT was the fourth day of September 1650, and in Edinburgh prevailed a panic such as had not been since the days of Flodden. Tidings had come of the disastrous fight at Dunbar, and with stupefied amazement the citizens heard of the total rout of the Scottish army on the preceding day at the hands of Cromwell. The news was hard to credit. All through the month of August, Cromwell and his army, from their headquarters at Musselburgh, had tried to enter Edinburgh, but in vain. Under the watchful generalship of David Leslie, the Scots had foiled every attempt he made, until, on 31st August, baffled and disappointed, the great

English soldier had been obliged to give orders to retire to Dunbar, "to be near our sole friends in this country, our ships." Thither Leslie had followed him, and in Edinburgh news of a crowning victory was complacently awaited. And now in place of victory the citizens were told of a defeat more shameful and complete than any other ever sustained by Scottish troops. The Scots numbered twenty-two thousand, the English eleven thousand men; yet, "after a hot dispute for about an hour" (as Cromwell writes), "we routed their whole army; killed near three thousand, and took ten thousand prisoners, their whole train of artillery being about thirty pieces, and near two hundred colours. And I believe, though many of ours be wounded, we lost not above *thirty* men!" Well has Carlyle termed this battle "Dunbar Drove."

Edinburgh was now defenceless, and on 7th September Cromwell and his victorious troops were in possession of the city. The wounded were placed in Heriot's Hospital, and the soldiers quartered mostly in Holyrood Palace, while Cromwell himself found a lodging in the Earl of Moray's house in the Canongate, from which centre for the next eleven months he directed the operations throughout Scotland against King Charles II.

His first operation of the kind lay at his very door, for it was none other than to wrest the Castle from those who still held it in name of the King

and the Scottish Estates. This promised to be no easy task, as, in addition to its naturally strong position, the citadel was well garrisoned, was strongly fortified, and was provisioned for a siege of at least fifteen months. Yet the task had to be attempted, and without delay the siege commenced. All the available guns were placed at the various points of vantage familiar in the previous sieges, and once more the sound of cannonading made daily music for the citizens of Edinburgh.

It proved a strange siege—not very striking in its incidents, and decidedly inglorious in its issue, yet with a special interest of its own. It was a siege conducted by correspondence rather than by shot and shell; not that the latter was wanting, but in effectiveness the pen in this contest proved mightier than the sword.

Within the Castle, besides the garrison under Governor Dundas—a young Scots laird much too inexperienced for a position suddenly become so responsible—there were also many refugees from the town, notably the ministers of the various churches. These had fled to the Castle as soon as they heard that Cromwell—the scourge of Ireland, a noted “Sectary,” and no true Presbyterian—was at hand. The unknown but vividly imagined terrors of his rule made their own personal safety their first consideration. They were not heroic these men, neither were they wise; and as to Cromwell’s methods

they were utterly mistaken. So far as the people of Scotland were concerned, his policy was one of conciliation, and in Edinburgh, as elsewhere, his rule was conspicuously just and tolerant. Moreover, being himself an intensely religious man, he desired for others that they should be religious too—or at least have the opportunity of so becoming and so continuing. To this desire was due the first exchange of letters with the Castle.

The Churches were without ministers, and the people were there waiting to be fed. So to Governor Dundas, Cromwell sends a communication offering the ministers "free liberty, if they please to take the pains, to preach in their several churches," and giving fullest guarantee that they shall not "in the least be molested." It was an honourable and Christian offer, but the ministers declined it. "They reserved themselves," so they wrote, "for better times, and would wait upon Him who hath hidden His face for a while from the sons of Jacob." Later letters showed that they resented being debarred from *political* preaching, and that they felt aggrieved at the practice prevalent in Cromwell's army whereby the duties of ministers were freely discharged by mere laymen. So, since they could not preach as they pleased, nor hinder others from exercising a like liberty, they refused to preach at all. A poor, unworthy position it was, and after a few scathing letters of rebuke and instruction Oliver left them alone. Since the

ministers would not preach, his officers did ; and in every kirk in Edinburgh, so long as the siege lasted, the pulpits were occupied by such of them as had the gift of preaching—Cromwell himself being said to have preached in St. Giles—and all to the general satisfaction of the people. They crowded to the churches, and it is recorded—by an Englishman, be it said—that so pleased were they that “they expressed much affection at the doctrine, in their usual way of groans !”

In the meantime the siege proceeded by the well-recognised methods. The blockade was strictly kept, and any man seeking to break it did so at grave cost. One poor gardener, who was *caught* giving information to the Castle, paid for it by being “hung up by the thumbs, and lighted matches put in between all his fingers till he was burned to the bone.” But such tortures were then matters of every day. Yet messages did pass from the outside world, and once, at least, the blockade was forced, with considerable loss to Cromwell’s men, and greatly to their leader’s chagrin. This brilliant achievement—the only one to be placed to the credit of the Scots—was the work of Captain Augustin, a German free-lance serving with the Scots. At the head of one hundred and twenty horse, “he forced Cromwell’s guards, killed eighty men of the enemy, put in thirty-six men to the Castle, with all sorts of spices and some other things, took thirty-five

horses and five prisoners," and then got safely away. But this, though a most dashing feat of arms, made no difference to the course of the siege.

The end of September, however, saw no real progress made, so more effective measures were devised. The help of the miner was called in, and by the hands of East Lothian colliers, excavations were begun in the rock on the south side of the Castle. Within a month Cromwell could report to the English Parliament that they had got sixty yards into the rock, so that soon they might hope to blow the Castle into the air. More powerful guns were also procured, and these being in position by 12th December, the second correspondence took place, which rapidly brought the siege to an end.

It began with a summons from Cromwell to Colonel Dundas to surrender the Castle "upon fit conditions." The governor demurred and temporised. He must first consult with those for whom he held the Castle—King Charles and his counsellors. But Cromwell had the game in his hand, and would suffer no such consultation. He would, if Colonel Dundas so wished, send any citizens of Edinburgh for one hour to the Castle, to report to him as to the state of affairs in the outer world. But the two whom Dundas named refused to act: they were too 'canny' to mix themselves up in the matter. Still Dundas hesitated, until, on 18th

December, he received the following peremptory note:—

“SIR,—All I have to say is shortly this: that if you will send out commissioners by 11 o'clock this night, thoroughly instructed and authorised to treat and conclude, you may have terms, honourable and safe to you, and to those whose interests are concerned in the things that are with you. . . .

To this I expect your answer within one hour, and rest, Sir, your servant,

OLIVER CROMWELL.”

This ended at once the correspondence and the siege. On terms honourable to the defenders, the Castle was surrendered, and on 24th December it passed, with all its guns and ammunition, into the hands of the English Parliamentary General.

But if the terms were honourable, it is open to question whether the surrender itself possessed that character. Universally, in Scotland, Dundas was held to have betrayed his trust, and was considered (like General Stössel in Port Arthur) to have yielded long before necessity compelled him. What the great Oliver himself thought may be gathered from his letter to the English Parliament, in which he says of the capture of the Castle, “The mercy is very great and seasonable. I think I need to say little of the strength of the place, which, if it had not come as it did, would have cost very much blood to have attained, *if at all to be attained.*”

So Scotland's ancient citadel passed into English

hands, and in these hands it remained while Cromwell lived. They were strong hands, and just ; but they were the hands of Southrons, and that to Scotsmen was a galling and humiliating thought. When, therefore, the day of deliverance came, as come it did in 1660, and the whole of Britain went mad in welcoming back its long-exiled King, it is not perhaps to be wondered at that in Edinburgh the jubilation was excessive. On the evening of the great day of rejoicings bonfires blazed in the streets and fireworks shot up into the air from the Castle rock. But the crowning triumph of art was when, high on a pole on the Castle Hill, was set the effigy of "that notable tyrant and traitor Oliver," and upon a neighbouring pole an effigy of Satan ; and "it was then ordered, by firework, engine, and train, that the devil did chase the traitor, and pursued him till he blew him in the air."

Such is the Castle's last memory of the great Lord Protector. It was a pitiful dishonouring of the mighty dead. The best that can be said of it is that it occurred at a time when the national sobriety of judgment and of demeanour had, by universal admission, departed. To be dishonoured at such a time was itself an honour.

THIRTEENTH MEMORY

Archibald Campbell, Marquis
of Argyll

A.D. 1660

THERE is one other great Scottish House besides the House of Stuart whose name has come to be imperishably linked with the Castle; but its association is with a quarter, and was obtained through experiences, which provoke no envy. The House of Argyll has given its name to the ancient State Prison which crowns the inner entrance to the citadel. Many a prisoner of note has that dark thick-walled chamber held, but none more famous than the two unfortunate Argylls, father and son, each of whom left it only for the scaffold. Yet so noble was their manner of leaving, that the scene of their confinement has ever since been reverenced as a shrine.

It was soon after the restoration of Charles II.

to the throne of his fathers that the first Marquis of Argyll came to be imprisoned there. He was a man who had played many parts in his time, and the parts had not always been consistent with each other. But these were days when thorough lifelong consistency was an exceedingly rare spectacle. The ever-changing conditions, both in State and in Church, made it unusually difficult for any man of note to steer a straight course, or even to know which course *was* the straight one. And, in common with many other Scottish nobles, Argyll had swerved occasionally. He had sided with the English Parliament in its struggle against King Charles I., but on Charles's death he had espoused the cause of outraged royalty, and with his own hand had crowned King Charles II. at Scone. Then came Cromwell, and the young King had to go on his travels, whereupon Argyll submitted to the Lord Protector's rule. In these varying attitudes he was a typical Scot of his day, as he also was in his open and enthusiastic adherence to the Covenant. There the deeper and finer side of his nature appeared, and it is to the strength and reality of this deeper note that he owes the high place he holds in his country's memory. But to this too he owed his imprisonment and death. His Covenanting sympathies and habits commended him neither to a graceless King nor to the over-zealous, roystering band of Royalists who now came to the top in Scottish affairs. It

was 'Down with the Covenant!' and 'Up with the King!' now, and Argyll was a doomed man.

Yet at first he little thought so. On King Charles's arrival in England he had journeyed up to London to offer his congratulations, but the welcome he met with was an order for his arrest and his imprisonment in the Tower. Eleven years before, when at Perth, and warmly appreciative of Argyll's services, Charles had written: "Particularly I doe promise that I will mak him Duk of Argyll, and Knight of the Garter. . . . And whensoever it shall please God to restor me to my just rights in England, I shall see him payed the forty thousand pounds sterlinc which is due to him. All which I doe promis to mak good, upon the word of a King." That was the promise, and this was the fulfilment! In the Book, of which Argyll was a diligent student, there is a sentence of which he must now have frequently thought with sad approval, "Put not thy trust in princes."

From July to December he was left to languish in the Tower, while preparations were being made in Scotland for his trial and condemnation. At last, all things being ready, he was conveyed to Leith by sea, and on 21st December 1660 the premier noble of Scotland was marched through the streets of Edinburgh up to the Castle, to find a lodgment in the prison which ever since has borne his name.

The trial which followed did not deserve the name. Verdict and sentence had alike been pre-determined, and a semblance of legal procedure was all that was aimed at; yet even that little proved hard to secure. Treason was the crime laid to the prisoner's charge, but no greater treason had been committed by him than that which well-nigh every noble in Scotland had also committed, his judges among the number. Moreover, King Charles had already declared, by an Act of Remission, the pardon of all State offences committed prior to 1651, and any 'treason' in which Argyll had taken part was covered by that pardon. True, during the ten years of Cromwell's rule he had submitted passively, but so had all Scotland. That was not 'treason.' The trial began on 13th February, but so difficult did Argyll's enemies find it to present a plausible case against him, that the proceedings dragged on for many weeks. Argyll's own skill in tearing to shreds the various accusations brought against him was remarkable and convincing, and it began to seem as if he would after all escape from the toils. But a most dishonourable act of General Monk, who had formerly been Cromwell's trusted lieutenant in Scotland, and was now the restorer of King Charles, ended that possibility and sealed the prisoner's doom. Towards the end of May, at the very moment when Argyll was about to be—most unwillingly—discharged for lack of

evidence against him, a messenger arrived in Edinburgh, bearing a packet from General Monk for the information of the judges. The packet was opened and found to contain letters which had been sent by Argyll to Monk in 1653, and in which affection and devotion were professed for the methods and purposes of Oliver Cromwell, whose rule in Scotland was then unquestioned.

It was just such evidence as his enemies had been thirsting for; and poor justification as it clearly was for passing a judgment of any severity, it was made to suffice for the severest of all judgments—death. Kneeling down, the unfortunate nobleman heard the cruel sentence pronounced: “That Archibald Campbell, Marquis of Argyll, is found guilty of high treason, and is adjudged to be execute to the death as a traitor, his head to be severed from his body at the Cross of Edinburgh, upon Monday the twenty-seventh instant, and to be affixed in the same place where the Marquis of Montrose’s head was formerly.”

In silence Argyll listened to the sentence; then rising to his feet, he made the memorable comment which combined a richly-merited reproof to his Monarch with a declaration of his own Christian hope. “I had the honour,” he said, “to set the Crown on the King’s head, and now he hastens me to a better crown than his own.”

Led by the guard to the common prison—no longer

to the Castle, now that he was a condemned man,—he found his loving wife waiting there to receive him, and in words of most rare gentleness he greeted her! “They have given me till Monday to be with you, my dear,” he said, “therefore let us make for it.” She understood only too well the terrible fact which the kind words veiled, and, throwing herself in his arms, sobbed out, “The Lord will requite it! The Lord will requite it!”

Two episodes of these last sad days are remembered, and they are interesting as showing the very conflicting features which marked the character of Argyll. Timid and faint-hearted in the presence of physical danger, he was yet heroic and steadfast in life’s greatest crisis.

His timidity was seen in an abortive attempt to escape from his prison in the Castle, which, had he been a braver man, might easily have succeeded. It happened towards the end of the trial, when the cruel purpose of his enemies had become very evident. A rescue party of his friends waited one day outside the Castle, while the Marchioness, conveyed, as was usual, in her sedan chair, went to visit her husband. Once inside his apartment she dressed him in her own clothes, and as in height the two were about equal, he had but to take her place in the chair, adjust the veil and headdress, and be carried beyond the gates—to freedom. But at the critical moment Argyll’s courage failed him, and

rather than risk discovery, he chose to remain and face the death which he knew to be inevitable.

Against this constitutional timidity, however, and quite wiping away its reproach, is the memorable story of his closing hours. Never has man died a braver or more Christian death. On Monday, 27th May 1661, he was to suffer—only two days after the sentence of death had been pronounced. That morning he rose early and spent a busy forenoon in the transaction of business, and in intercourse with friends; and through it all he showed not merely a calmness such as none of them could equal, but even a lightness and joyousness of heart that could not be restrained. The spirit of the Covenanter waxed strong in him, as it did in so many in those days when they were face to face with death. The scaffold not infrequently showed the world the Scottish Covenanter at his highest and his best. So it was with this noble of the Covenant. Two o'clock approached, and he was told he must move to the scene of death. At once he said good-bye to the friends who were in the room and accompanied his guard. "I could die like a Roman," was his remark, "but I choose rather to die like a Christian. Come away, gentlemen, he that goes first goes cleanliest."

In the room was James Guthrie, like himself a Covenanter, and appointed also to die within the next few days. The two kindred souls took a

touching farewell and strengthened each other for their coming trial. "My Lord," said Guthrie, "God has been with you, He is with you, and He will be with you."

And God was with His servant. When he reached the place of execution he mounted the scaffold with steady step, gravely saluted all present, and declared his innocence of the crime for which he suffered, his loyalty to the King, and his forgiveness to all. The last moment had now come, but the once timid Argyll was timid no longer. Advancing to the Maiden—as the Scottish guillotine was termed—he passed near Mr George Hutchison, the attendant minister. "My Lord," said the minister, "now hold your grip sicker." "Mr Hutchison," replied Argyll, "you know what I said in the chamber: I am not afraid to be surprised with fear." Kneeling down before the Maiden, he laid his head on the block, commended his soul to God, then raised his hand,—and the sharp blade came flashing down.

Up in the Castle the small dark room above the archway was now tenantless, but the name of the Marquis of the Covenant, who had been its tenant for five weary months, abides there to this day, and so long as the Castle stands, his memory will not be forgotten. It is the memory of a man who, with many failings, yet had "piety for a Christian, sense for a counsellor, courage for a martyr, and soul for a king!"

FOURTEENTH MEMORY

“Alas, Unfortunate Argyll!”

A.D. 1662-1685

THE day was the 20th December 1681, and the Argyll Tower stood darkly outlined against a wild wintry sky. Twenty years had come and gone since the great Marquis had been led forth to judgment and to death from out that thick-walled prison; and now another Archibald Campbell, the ninth Earl of Argyll, heir to his father's misfortunes as well as to his name, was tenanting the same ominous chamber.

It was not the Earl's first acquaintance with what might well be termed the “family prison,” for twice already he had experienced its discomforts. Once, strangely enough, had been at the instance of Cromwell, who, thinking the Royalist zeal of young Lord Lorn (as he then was) of too pronounced a character for the public safety, had confined it within the Castle walls. And again the Tower had opened

its doors to the Earl when, in 1662, a hasty word of criticism of the Government written in a private letter, was made use of by his enemy Middleton, the King's Commissioner in Scotland, to secure his condemnation to death on a frivolous charge of 'leasing-making.' It was so scandalous an abuse of power that, when word of it reached London, Chancellor Clarendon exclaimed indignantly in the King's own presence that if he thought he lived in a land where such things could be done, he would get out of His Majesty's dominions as fast as his gout would permit him! The King himself was not a little indignant with his Commissioner, and a Royal Order forbidding the execution was forthwith despatched to Scotland.

But by 1681, when for the third time Argyll found himself a prisoner, religious controversy and party strife had waxed more bitter and remorseless, and the dangers attending imprisonment had seriously increased. The persecution of the Covenanters had been raging for a considerable time, but so far as success in stamping out Presbyterianism was concerned, it had raged in vain. And now a further measure had been devised by which Presbyterian sympathisers in high places might be struck at. This was the imposition of an oath on all holding official positions, by which they declared their belief in the Scots Confession of Faith, and acknowledged the

King as supreme head of the Church. The two statements were plainly inconsistent with each other, the latter being contradicted by the former, besides being particularly obnoxious to a keen Presbyterian. So, when Argyll had the oath tendered to him, he took it with this proviso: "so far as it is consistent with itself and the Protestant religion." Quite a reasonable annotation it was, yet because of it he was arrested on a charge of "treason and leasing-making," was found guilty by a Council of inquiry, of which the president was his hereditary foe the Marquis of Montrose, and was condemned to death. The sentence required, however, to be confirmed by the King ere it could be carried into effect; and in the belief that King Charles would never ratify such an injustice, Argyll bore his imprisonment cheerfully. But late in the afternoon on this day of crisis, the 20th December, he received, through a friend, the startling intelligence that the King had approved of the sentence, and that on the very next day it would be carried out—unless something were done to avoid it.

It was escape or die, and thanks to the bravery and quick resource of a woman, the former alternative was successfully adopted. The prison was closely guarded, yet the visit of a near relative to a doomed man could not be forbidden, and when about seven o'clock in the evening his daughter-in-law, Lady Sophia Lindsay of Balcarres, attended by a page,

asked permission to say a last good-bye, the favour was readily granted. An hour later she came out into the darkness of the wild winter's night, still accompanied by her servant, who obsequiously kept the train of her ladyship's dress from dragging in the mire. To the guard all seemed as it should be, and lady and page were allowed to pass. Within the prison, however, there had been effected a change of clothing, the page, a loyal retainer of the House of Argyll, having taken his master's place and dress, and now in guise of a servant Argyll was making a bid for freedom. At the outer gate, however, for one anxious moment all seemed lost. Then the sentry apparently suspecting something, laid hold of the man-servant's arm. Poor Argyll, in the anxious excitement of the moment, dropped the train which he was carrying, and discovery seemed inevitable, when a flash of ready wit on the part of the lady saved the situation. "Thou careless loon!" she exclaimed, and rescuing her dress from the mire, she threw it in his face, bespattering him with mud and half-concealing his features. To the sentry it seemed a capital joke, and laughing his approval at the merited rebuke, he let the Countess and her clumsy footman pass out. Once outside the gate, willing friends were found ready to help, and long ere the following day broke Argyll was far from Edinburgh. As with so many Scottish Presbyterians in those sad days, Holland was his goal, and reaching it

in safety, he found there a quiet refuge for four peaceful years.

But the little tower over the Castle gate had not yet done with Argyll. Its clasp was only temporarily relaxed, and ere long it was again to close, for the fourth and last time, on its now familiar tenant.

In 1685 the Earl returned to his native land, to head what he hoped would be a national uprising against the bitter oppressions of King James. But it proved a futile and most pitiful venture. With a more able leader the result might have been different, but Argyll, though personally brave, amiable, and honest, had neither the strength of character nor the military skill needed for so desperate a project. Landing in the west country, he gathered a fair army together. Yet ere ever the test of battle could be tried, division among the leaders caused the breaking up and dispersal of the troops and the utter destruction of Argyll's hopes. In an attempt to flee he was overtaken and struck to the ground by some troopers who were ignorant of his rank, until an exclamation wrung from his despair enlightened them. "Alas, unfortunate Argyll!" he ejaculated, and so sealed his fate.

In triumph he was conveyed to Edinburgh, and there with shameful ignominy was led through the streets to his old quarters on the Castle Hill. Riding bareback, with his hands tied behind him and his

head uncovered, and preceded by the public hangman, the unfortunate nobleman was made a sport and derision to the fickle rabble of the city, and when at last the welcome privacy of the old tower was reached, iron fetters were found awaiting him. This time there was to be no escape.

As it had been with the father, so also did it prove with the son. His last days were the most heroic of all his days. On 20th June the prison had received him, and by 30th June all was over. As a matter of course the death penalty was the sentence pronounced on him by the Council, and Argyll, expecting nothing else, received the intimation with the utmost calmness. One incident especially of those closing days, of which the tower chamber was the scene, has appealed to the hearts of succeeding generations with peculiar power—"Argyll's Last Sleep." In the House of Commons it forms the subject of one of the great fresco paintings, and by the master-pen of Macaulay has been described in words that make the story live: "So effectually had religious faith and hope, co-operating with natural courage and equanimity, composed his spirits that on the very day on which he was to die he dined with appetite, conversed with gaiety at table, and after his last meal lay down, as was his wont, to take a short slumber, in order that his body and mind might be in full vigour when he should mount the scaffold. At this time one

of the Lords of the Council (supposed to have been Middleton), who had probably been bred a Presbyterian, and had been seduced by interest to join in oppressing the Church of which he had once been a member, came to the Castle with a message from his brethren and demanded to see the Earl. It was answered that the Earl was asleep. The Privy Councillor thought that this was a subterfuge, and insisted on entering. The door of the cell was softly opened, and there lay Argyll on the bed, sleeping, in his irons, the placid sleep of infancy. The conscience of the renegade smote him. He turned away, sick at heart, ran out of the Castle, and took refuge in the dwelling of a lady of his family who lived hard by. There he flung himself on a couch and gave himself up to an agony of remorse and shame. His kinswoman, alarmed by his looks and groans . . . prayed him to tell her what had disheartened him. He replied, 'I have seen Argyll within an hour of eternity sleeping as sweetly as ever man did. But as for me——!'

On the scaffold the same quiet conscience which had secured to the prisoner an hour of gentle sleep, enabled him to face death with a calm and easy readiness such as even in that age, when heroism was common, men felt to be sublime. Conducted to the Market Cross, where the grim apparatus of execution awaited him, he mounted the platform with unfaltering step, surveyed leisurely the con-

struction of the death-dealing guillotine, then kissing it, gaily remarked to those standing near, "'Tis the sweetest *maiden* I have ever kissed."

A brief address to the assembled crowd followed, in which he professed anew the faith for which he had lived and striven, and in which he died, and declared his forgiveness of his enemies. Then, kneeling down, he prayed thrice, "Lord, receive me into Thy glory," placed his head all ready for the axe, and in a moment his misfortunes had come to a final end.

To the Magdalene Chapel in the Cowgate they bore the poor headless body, and in that ancient house of God, upon a table which is still preserved, it lay, until by loving hands it was carried to quiet Kilmun in far Argyll. There in the sepulchre of his fathers, and in a land where his race have ever been sure of men's love and honour, far off from the dark Castle Tower and the great city where he suffered so much, "Unfortunate Argyll" sleeps well.

FIFTEENTH MEMORY

A Great Churchman

A.D. 1675-1683

THE Castle is not rich in memories of Churchmen. Monarchs, nobles, soldiers, and statesmen naturally fill the leading *rôles* in the many stirring dramas enacted; ministers of the Church find more fitting shrines elsewhere. Yet there is one minister whose name is well entitled to a place in the Castle's calendar by reason of his prolonged involuntary residence within its walls, and his subsequent services to his country. This is William Carstares, the man to whom more than to any other is due the final establishment of Presbyterianism in Scotland.

In Carstares's earlier years there had been no prospect of his ever occupying a position in which such service could be rendered. The son of a prominent Covenanting minister, he had, after graduating at Edinburgh University in 1667, been obliged to proceed to Holland for his training in

theology, for by that time the prosecution of the Covenanters had begun, and Scotland was no place for a young Presbyterian student of divinity. But what seemed then a bitter hardship proved in the end to be the avenue to undreamt-of greatness and service. In Holland Carstares became more than a good student of theology. He showed himself also a keen observer of men and movements, quickly ripened into a sagacious and trustworthy statesman, and, most important of all for his future work, was honoured with the friendship and confidence of William, Prince of Orange.

The time had not yet arrived when William should deliver Britain from the sad misrule of the Stuarts, but it was coming fast. Alike in England and in Scotland increasing numbers of the people were learning to look to Holland for the future salvation of their country; and while William carefully avoided taking any premature action, he as carefully kept himself in constant touch with what was going on across the Channel. Communications between him and those in Britain who chafed under the existing conditions were frequent, and in the transmission of these he found an able and reliable agent in the young Scots minister.

It was work, however, to which grave risks attached, as Carstares soon experienced. In 1674, when across in London on a confidential mission, he was arrested. Papers of a compromising nature

were found in his possession, and in the beginning of the following year he was sent as a prisoner to Scotland for further examination by the authorities of his native kingdom. But to these authorities the simplest and safest course seemed to be to shut him up where he could do no further harm, and shut up he was in the prison of Edinburgh Castle in February 1675, the governor of the Castle being instructed to keep him a close prisoner until further orders.

When first imprisoned, Carstares no doubt anticipated a speedy release, but the event was far otherwise. Weeks glided into months, and the months became years, and still no release came. Nor did it come until *four and a half years* had passed away! He and the Castle had ample time to form unforgettable ties. Weary, trying years they must have been to the keen-minded, high-souled young patriot, thus forcibly secluded from the public life of his country at so critical an hour. And the seclusion was very complete, for although his old father was residing at the time in Edinburgh, his son seems rarely to have been allowed to see him. "Most of the time," writes Carstares, "I was denied converse with any of my nearest relations, even in the presence of a keeper." Yet, on the other hand, with the authorities of the Castle he must have been on unusually kindly terms, for when he did at last regain his freedom,

and had left Scotland behind him, he wrote to his sister asking her to pay frequent visits to his "friends in the Castle" (Lady Lundin, the governor's wife, and others), and hoped she "would not forget the obligations he was under to them."

It was an uncommon friendliness to be shown towards an imprisoned Presbyterian minister. Whence came it? Probably from the ingenuous action of a boy, the story of which forms one of the few peaceful idylls contained in the Castle's otherwise stormy record.

It happened one day that the governor's son, a boy of twelve years of age, when roaming about the Castle buildings, spied the grating of the cell in which Carstares was confined, and, boy-like, looked in to see who was there. Carstares, seeing the child, came forward to the grating, and the two had a friendly talk. The boy was delighted with the experience, and next day came back again. The friendship grew apace, and soon it came to be a rare thing for a day to pass without a long talk between the strangely assorted friends. For hours at times the boy would sit outside the grating "lamenting his unhappy situation, and telling him a thousand stories to divert him." Child-like, too, he brought little presents of fruit and dainties, and, what to Carstares was much more precious, paper, pen and ink, and even books.

It is a rarely beautiful episode, and speaks as

eloquently for the ingenuous character of the boy as it does for the kindly human nature of the statesman. One cannot but think that this prolonged intercourse was charitably winked at by the governor, if not also encouraged by indirect kindnesses from himself.

But a prison is an irksome dwelling even though its discomforts are mitigated by kindness; and it was a glad day for Carstares when, in the end of July 1679, with many an admonition as to future better behaviour, he was escorted to the Castle gates and set free.

These were not times, however, when by a lover of his country such admonition could easily be kept. Certainly Carstares did not keep it. First in England, where he remained for a few years, and then in Holland, he threw himself anew into the old cause, worked for it in the old ways, and at last, in consequence, found himself repeating his old experience of occupying a prison cell in the city of Edinburgh. This was five years after his liberation from the Castle prison, and in these years things both in Scotland and England had been going from bad to worse. Moderate men had become convinced revolutionaries, while former revolutionaries had developed into dangerous and desperate fanatics. Even assassination of the King and his brother had been planned by some of those

wilder and more reckless spirits, as being the only sure method of ending the long oppression of the Stuarts. But the plot was discovered, and destruction fell not only on the conspirators but also on the more moderate schemes of revolution in which leading noblemen of both countries had been concerned. The executioner's axe was kept busy. Noble after noble was sent to the block, and in July 1683 the capture of Carstares in Kent seemed to open a way to laying hold of yet more victims.

What the Government desired was to obtain proof of the connection of such leading Scotsmen as Argyll, Stair, Fletcher, and Jerviswood with the baser plot which had been unveiled, or some other information equally implicating and deadly, and they tried to obtain it from Carstares. But they tried in vain. Before the English Privy Council Carstares was obdurate. He would or could reveal nothing. So, in the hope that his native air would make him more amenable, he was transferred to Scotland, and on 14th November 1683, found safe lodgement in the Tolbooth Prison of Edinburgh.

Wherein lay the superior power of Scotland in inducing confessions from unwilling prisoners? Alas, it lay in the use of those barbarous methods of torture which, long forbidden in England, were still legal north of the Tweed. These methods were now to be tried on unhappy Carstares.

At first the opportunity was afforded him of

making the desired statements without the torture. But as in London, so in Edinburgh, Carstares firmly refused to make any statement either maligning or compromising his friends. "Before God," said the Lord Chancellor, as the prisoner was led away from his first fruitless interview with the Scottish Privy Council, "there shall not be a joint of you left whole."

When next he faced the Council it was evident that the threat was not to be an empty one, for the *thumbkins* were ready waiting. Into this fiendish little apparatus Carstares's thumbs were inserted, and then, with the Privy Councillors looking on, one of their number being the Episcopal Bishop of Edinburgh, and the others nobles of highest rank, the examination under torture proceeded. Round went the vicious little screw, ever tighter grew the pressure, more excruciating became the pain. The sweat poured down over brow and cheeks, and yet Carstares kept silence. Two of the Councillors could not bear the sight and left the room, the Duke of Queensberry saying as he went, "I see he will die rather than confess."

"Give another turn to the screw," was all the Chancellor's comment, and it was done. Carstares screamed out in his agony. "The bones are squeezed to pieces," he cried. But still he made no admission. "Bring the *boot*," was now the order, and this more dreadful instrument of torture was fitted on.

Fortunately, however, the operator was unskilful and could not manage to adjust the wedge, so another trial of the thumbkins was resorted to. For nearly an hour and a half the torture continued, when, all having availed nothing, the prisoner was led back to his cell and was warned that next morning, if still obdurate, the 'boot' would be applied by one skilled in its use.

But with the morning there came a little mercy. Through torture inflicted on another prisoner much of the information wanted had been already obtained, and Carstares was now asked only to answer certain questions based on this information. Should he agree to do this, the Government promised him a free pardon, and solemnly undertook that his statement should never be used as evidence against any one. On this understanding Carstares answered the questions, signed the deposition which revealed nothing not already known, and was thereafter conducted to his old familiar quarters in the Castle. There the mangled hands got time to recover a little of their strength, and soon Carstares was once more free; but into his heart there entered a bitter soreness, for the solemn promise which the Government gave him had been broken, and one of his old and trusted friends, Baillie of Jerviswood, had suffered death, the iniquitous sentence having been largely based on words extorted from Carstares.

It is easy at the distance of two centuries to criticise, and when seated in our comfortable chairs to say what a man faced with torture should have said and done. But, apart from the fact that Carstares' confession would have been harmless if the promise made to him had been kept, we have the judgment of his contemporaries to guide us. What did they think?

The greatest of them all was William, Prince of Orange. Long afterwards, when securely seated on the throne of Britain, he was speaking with Carstares about this very episode, and expressed a desire to see the thumbkins that had been used and to try them on. So the little instruments of persuasion were brought and fitted on, as gently as might be, to the royal thumbs. Carstares then mildly turned the screw. "Harder," said the King, and another turn was given; but still the pain was quite endurable. "Harder yet," commanded William, and this time Carstares gave a fairly vigorous twist. It was enough. "Stop, doctor, stop!" cried the monarch, "another turn would make me confess anything!"

And what thought the people of Scotland? Their thoughts may best be judged by the many tributes they paid in after years to the worth of the man who had so greatly suffered and was so bitterly deceived. Edinburgh knew no more honoured citizen, Scotland no more patriotic son, the Church no more prized minister. Principal of Edinburgh

University, Minister of St Giles, Moderator of the General Assembly, and the trusted Counsellor of King William, the former prisoner of the Castle was a man whom his own generation delighted to honour, and whose value to his country grows the more apparent as the centuries pass.

SIXTEENTH MEMORY

“Bonnie Dundee”

A.D. 1689

IN the wall which surmounts the western escarpment of the Castle rock is the ancient sally-port, whose highest honour lies in having given safe exit to the body of Queen Margaret, when in an anxious hour the remains of the royal saint were being borne to honourable burial. But the old postern has a much later claim to special remembrance, and upon a tablet in the wall immediately above there runs an inscription—undecipherable from the roadway below save by the most eagle-eyed—which thus sets forth the claim:

AT THIS POSTERN
JOHN GRAHAM OF CLAVERHOUSE
VISCOUNT DUNDEE
HELD A FINAL CONFERENCE
WITH THE DUKE OF GORDON,
GOVERNOR OF EDINBURGH CASTLE,
ON QUITTING THE CONVENTION OF ESTATES,
18TH MARCH 1689.

The date mentioned saw the climax of a week of crisis in the fortunes of Scotland and of intense moment to the whole of Britain. In England the Revolution of 1688 was an accomplished fact. James II. had fled to France, and William, Prince of Orange, now sat upon the English throne of the Stuarts, in accordance with the expressed desire of the English people. But what would Scotland—the ancient land of the Stuarts—do? Until it should speak, and speak emphatically in his favour, William's tenure of even the English throne was anything but secure. Not for the first time the destinies of Britain lay in Scottish hands.

To decide the momentous question a Convention of the Scottish Estates had been summoned to meet in Edinburgh on 14th March 1689, and seldom has the Scottish capital received a more discordant company of visitors. Presbyterian, Episcopalian, and Roman Catholic lords all were there. Men who for twenty years had been bitter enemies, alike on ecclesiastical and political grounds, now met in council in the Parliament Hall, with the old enmities burning as fiercely in their hearts as ever, and chafing in spirit that the swords might not be unsheathed. In the city itself like conditions prevailed. Armed adherents of the rival parties had gathered in large numbers, and went about the streets scowling at each other when they met. Especially numerous were the

men from the western shires. Long hunted over the moors for their religion's sake, they had seen, in the political turmoil, the end of their persecutions and the possibility of vengeance on old enemies, and had flocked to the city, eager to strike a blow if need or opportunity should arise; and if one sight which they there beheld was more calculated than another to quicken their lust for vengeance, it was the sight of their arch-persecutor, Graham of Claverhouse, now known as Viscount Dundee.

With the change of name there had come to this much-hated — and much-lauded — soldier, if not a change of nature, at least a welcome alteration in his sphere of duty; and if anything can help to soften the judgment passed by posterity on the brutalities of 'Bloody Clavers,' it is the memory of the gallant loyalty to a fallen cause which was shown so conspicuously by Viscount Dundee. Whatever his defects as a man, disloyalty was not one of them, and at a time when men only too frequently changed their loyalty with the changing fortunes of their Sovereign, this is much to his credit. He was a 'King James man' out and out, and at the very hour when he came to the Convention he held a Commission from the exiled King as Commander-in-Chief of his Scottish forces. Seeing that these 'forces' consisted only of some sixty men who accompanied him and the garrison of Edinburgh Castle, which under the Roman Catholic Duke of

Gordon still held out for King James, Dundee's daring in risking himself in Edinburgh is apparent. But in daring he never failed. Brave and fearless as ever he came to the Convention, knowing well the risks; and though many a resentful Covenanter, on meeting his old oppressor face to face, might feel murder in his heart, the strong daring glance of Dundee stayed the hand from striking. As sings Sir Walter in one of his most stirring ballads :—

The cowls of Kilmarnock had spits and had spears
And lang-hafted gullies to kill Cavaliers ;
But they shrunk to close-heads, and the causeway left free,
At a toss of the bonnet of Bonnie Dundee.

In the Convention the course events were to take was apparent as soon as the Duke of Hamilton, the leader of King William's party, by a decisive majority of votes was elected chairman. This meant the deposition of James from the Scottish throne, the succession of William, the overthrow of Episcopacy, and the restoration of Presbyterianism. Each succeeding vote taken saw more and more of the waverers go over to the winning side. Then one after another of King James's own party showed signs of weakening, and when it was rumoured that the Duke of Gordon, despairing of his cause, was responding to negotiations for the surrender of the Castle, Dundee saw that the only hope for his King lay now, not in the council chamber, but on the

field of battle. There the sword might achieve what words would never do.

But ere taking this decisive step, one last effort was made to change the trend of affairs in the Convention. A secret visit to the Castle, in which he eluded the surrounding guard, enabled Dundee to tell his plans to the Duke of Gordon, who immediately broke off the negotiations for surrender. That was something gained. So long as the great guns of the fortress pointed on Parliament House, much in the way of persuasion might be possible, especially if the armed mob of Cameronian Whigs could be got out of the city. Accordingly next day, the 18th March 1689, Dundee laid information before the Convention of an attempted assassination of himself and Sir George Mackenzie, and requested that, for the sake of public safety, the city be cleared of strangers. But in vain the net was spread in sight of the birds. The majority had no wish to see themselves denuded of armed support, and laid open to the argument of force from the Castle artillery; and when after hearing his complaint they calmly passed on to the business of the day, Dundee knew that his scheme had failed, and that the time for action had arrived. Quitting the Convention with indignant disdain, he proceeded to his lodgings, summoned his men, armed himself as for battle, and with his handful of followers behind him rode out of the city.

Away to the hills, to the caves, to the rocks—
Ere I own a usurper, I'll couch with the fox !
And tremble, false Whigs, in the midst of your glee,
You have not seen the last of my bonnet and me !
Come fill up my cup, come fill up my can,
Come saddle your horses, and call up your men ;
Come open the West Port, and let us gang free,
And it's room for the bonnets of Bonnie Dundee !

That leisurely ride of Dundee, enshrined as it has been in ringing verse, will not easily be forgotten by Scotsmen. The calm contempt of it seizes and holds the imagination of men to-day, as it also did with the citizens of Edinburgh who witnessed it, but with feelings very different. They were profoundly thankful that a man so dangerous to staid-living folk should take himself off. Some indeed counselled pursuit ;

But the Provost, douce man, said, "Just e'en lat him be,
The guude toun is well quit of that deil of Dundee."

So through the Nether Bow Port he rode (not the West Port as in the ballad), and thence by Leith Wynd crossing the hollow where now stands the Waverley Station, he reached the high ground on the other side of the Nor' Loch, when, wheeling westward, he followed the country road that corresponded to what is now Princes Street, having the Castle in full view, the one fortified place in Scotland of which his Sovereign still was lord.

Looking out from the Castle wall, telescope in hand, was the anxious governor. Dundee had apprised him before of his movements in the

event of the first part of his scheme failing, and when the Duke descried the little band of riders with the soldierly figure at their head he knew what had happened. With a sad heart he realised that in all Scotland none but the gallant Dundee and himself now represented the Stuart cause, and, anxious for a final consultation, he fluttered a signal to his brother cavalier. Dundee saw it and understood. At the Kirk Brae Head, near St Cuthbert's Church, he halted his troop, dismounted, and went forward himself on foot to the base of the steep western slope of the Castle rock. High above, at the little postern, the Duke was waiting, and fully armed though he was, Dundee did not hesitate. Up the rugged ascent he scrambled, then much more inaccessible than it is now, when the naked rocks have been largely covered by the accumulated soil of two centuries, and the ascent has been correspondingly simplified. Even now it is a stiff climb, but then, especially to a man in full military equipment, it must have been no small feat. But it was done—to the admiration of his followers and to the amazement and terror of the citizens, who saw it from afar, and augured from it terrible consequences.

What passed between the two chiefs has never been fully told, but it is safe to say that they strengthened each other's hearts, and gave pledges, each to the other, of fidelity to the cause they

served, Dundee exhorting Gordon to hold the Castle until he should return sweeping in triumph from the north, with his Highlanders behind him. One recorded word of their talk has been preserved, and it is suggestive: "Whither goest thou?" asked the Duke. "Where the shade of Montrose may direct me," was the ominous answer, a reply which Sir Walter has carefully preserved, and as true as it is suggestive. Like Montrose, his great kinsman who fought and suffered for an earlier Stuart King, Dundee would seek the Highlands, and there put his fortunes and the fortunes of his Sovereign to the final test:

The Gordon demands of him which way he goes—
"Where'er shall direct me the shade of Montrose !
Your Grace in short space shall hear tidings of me,
Or that low lies the bonnet of Bonnie Dundee.

"There are hills beyond Pentland, and lands beyond Forth,
If there's lords in the Lowlands, there's chiefs in the North ;
There are wild duniewassals, three thousand times three,
Will cry *hoigh !* for the bonnet of Bonnie Dundee."

The conference was over; it was now to be deeds, not words. Dundee scrambled down the rock face, rejoined his troop, and with a farewell wave to the still watching Gordon, rode away to the west, and then to the north, the goal of his hopes—and the grave.

He waved his proud hand, and the trumpets were blown,
The kettle-drums clashed, and the horsemen rode on,
Till on Ravelston's cliffs and on Clermiston's lea
Died away the wild war-notes of Bonnie Dundee.

That ride led far, for it was the first stage in that venturous journey which ended three months later at Killiecrankie. There the Highlanders amply justified Dundee's trust. With their wild war-cry they descended like an avalanche on the enemy and carried everything before them. But alas for their cause! Their gallant commander was slain in the hour of his victory, and the hopes of the Stuart were ended, for

Low lay the bonnet of Bonnie Dundee.

SEVENTEENTH MEMORY

The Castle for King James!

A.D. 1689

WHEN on Ravelston's cliffs "the wild war-notes of Bonnie Dundee" had died away, the Duke of Gordon turned him to his hard task—to defend the Castle entrusted to his care by his Sovereign, and maintain the 'maiden fortress' inviolate until the promised relief should come. Within twenty days Dundee had said he would return at the head of his victorious Highlanders. Only three weeks! Could the Castle be held till then? The Duke was a brave soldier, an honourable man, and a patriotic Scot, albeit a most loyal servant of King James. No better defender could the Castle have had. Under him what could be done would be done. But he was fighting against heavy odds; and he knew it.

Already he had received a taste of what was to come, for since 9th December the Castle had been on its guard—at first against any sudden attack by

an infuriated mob such as on that day had stormed Holyrood and wrecked the Chapel Royal; and latterly against any attempt to enforce what the governor considered the unconstitutional demand of the Privy Council, that he, *being a Papist*, should surrender the Castle to them. More serious, but equally ineffectual, was a similar request made on 14th March by the Earls of Lothian and Tweeddale on behalf of the Convention of Estates, which had then met. And most ominous of all was the formal demand which then followed. Clothed in full official dress, the royal heralds appeared before the Castle gates and summoned the Duke to surrender, proclaiming him a *traitor* if he should refuse, and promising a reward of six months' pay to the Protestants in the garrison if they would seize the Duke and deliver up the Castle. But, despite the threat and the danger, the Duke refused to comply. "Tell the Convention," he said, "I keep the Castle by commission from our common master, and am resolved to defend it to the last extremity." Then, with a good-humoured irony, such as often lightened the serious conflicts of these days, he handed some guineas to the heralds, telling them to drink the King's health and that of *all honest men* in the Convention, and adding 'in drollery'; "I would advise you not to proclaim men traitors to the State who have the King's coat on their backs—at least until they have turned it!"

After this there was no alternative but that of arms. But first, ere the siege should begin in earnest, the Duke made sure that none were within the Castle unwillingly. Parading the whole garrison, he gave to all who so desired the opportunity to leave. Eighty soldiers, forming nearly half the force, availed themselves of the opportunity, and there was left a depleted garrison of three officers (the Duke of Gordon, Colonel Winram the Lieutenant-Governor, and Ensign Winchester), four sergeants, sixty privates, and twenty volunteers. A small band truly for the work that was waiting! But more serious even than the paucity of men was the deficiency of stores and ammunition. Only seventeen bombs were in the magazine, and of powder and ball barely sufficient for three months' defence. Yet with a brave heart, hoping much and daring more, the Duke made all necessary arrangements for the defence, and on 18th March, the day of Dundee's departure, the real siege began.

That day the Castle was invested by forces hastily raised by the Convention, and drawn mainly from the Cameronian Whigs who thronged the city. In later times the fine regiment thus brought into being has won for itself a name and fame second to none, and even in these first days of its soldiering its keenest opponents had to admit the intense zeal and fighting power of the men; though coupled with such admissions there might be sundry other

reflections of a different kind. "These Cameronians," writes one of the Castle garrison, who kept a most valuable diary of the siege, "are the worst kind of Presbyterians, who confine the Church to a few of the western shires of the kingdom of Scotland; disclaim all kings (save King Jesus) who will not worship God after their way; think it their duty to murder all who are out of the state of grace—that is, not of their communion; in a word, who take away the second table of the decalogue upon pretence of keeping the first; and who are only for sacrifice, but for no mercy at all."

Anyhow, these Cameronians made good soldiers, and for a week they watched the Castle well. But for siege work troops of experience and gunners of accurate aim were needed; and on 25th March there arrived from England three regiments under General Mackay, bringing with them "cannons, provisions, arms, and ammunition," and the Cameronians were relieved of their first military duty.

Batteries were at once erected and trenches dug, and soon the Castle was exposed to a fairly continuous artillery fire, to which, through lack of artillery ammunition, it could make but little effective reply. At times, however, the Castle guns did bark —now at the ruined tower of Castle Collops on the High Riggs, where a battery had been erected, and again at the old tower of Coates—and generally a bite followed the bark. But the Duke wished to

avoid, as far as possible, inflicting any injury on the buildings of the town, and this placed a restraint on the efforts of his gunners, such as those of the besieging force knew nothing of, with the result that the Castle garrison sustained far heavier damage than did the besiegers.

The life within the Castle in these strenuous days is reflected in the welcome *Diary of the Siege*. At first the spirits of the garrison were high. When tidings arrived that King James had landed in Ireland they spent some of their precious ammunition in making the guns roar out a royal salute, and in the evening bonfires blazed exultingly on the ramparts. A few days later they poked fun at the besiegers. By beat of drum they asked a parley, and gravely requested that they might be supplied with a few packs of cards for their amusement! It was a pleasing bit of bravado, for truly little time had the men for cards.

By the middle of May they had less. Then fresh troops arrived to help the besiegers, and additional artillery. Heriot's Hospital and Mouterhouse Hill (the site of the Register House) were each provided with a battery, and the rain of bombs upon the Castle became incessant. Still the garrison kept cheerful. Bombs did not travel then with the velocity of modern shells, and could usually be avoided. But the buildings could not avoid them, and very soon the accurate range and elevation

having been obtained, every roof in the Castle was shattered. The church was destroyed, the Royal quarters were seriously damaged, and the only safe retreat for those who were off duty was in the vaults underground. Still there was no despair. Food continued sufficient, and a growing anxiety about the water-supply was temporarily removed by an event which was regarded as an expression of Nature's sympathy with the Stuart cause! On 20th May there was a snowstorm of such uncommon severity that all over the Castle yard the snow lay to a depth of two feet. A large quantity was hastily collected, and in melting supplied the men with the much-needed water; and still the hearts of the besieged kept hopeful.

In the city they had numerous friends with whom they contrived to maintain frequent communication, and so kept in touch with those who were fighting King James's cause elsewhere. For this most valuable intercourse they were especially indebted to a lady, Mrs Ann Smith, a keen Jacobite, the window of whose house was visible from the Castle. Should a friend wish to visit the Castle she signalled from her window, and that night a party of six would leave the fortress by a gateway on the north wall overlooking the Nor' Loch, and, descending the rock, would row to the other side of the Loch and convey the visitor, who was ready waiting. On safe return a musket was discharged from the

Half-Moon Battery, and Mrs Smith knew that all was well.

But on 31st May this refreshing intercourse with the outer world came to an abrupt end, and in a manner that cast a gloom over the whole garrison. It was discovered in the morning that five men had deserted overnight to the enemy! At once the Governor realised what this would mean to their friends in town, and hastily despatched a messenger to warn them of their danger and bid them flee. But the warning came too late; the deserters had been beforehand. Every friend of the Castle was arrested and imprisoned, especially hard being the treatment meted out to Mrs Smith. The secret approaches to the fortress, being now revealed, were strongly guarded, and the information received as to the straits of the garrison for food and ammunition caused the siege to be pressed more vigorously than ever. Entrenchments were thrown up on the eastern approach, not far from the Half-Moon Battery, and in exultation an *orange* flag was fluttered in sight of the besieged.

It was evident to the Duke that unless some unforeseen event happened the struggle must quickly cease, so, summoning the garrison together, he told them plainly how things stood, and again gave to every man the opportunity of withdrawing from the Castle. To their honour, be it said, not a man availed himself of the offer. Thanking them for

their loyalty, the Duke at the same time assured them that he would not put an unreasonable strain upon their devotion. "Gentlemen," he said, "if we be not relieved in a competent time I will capitulate; and every one of you shall have as good terms as myself."

A week of vigorous cannonading followed, in the course of which the wall of St. Cuthbert's Church was breached by the Castle guns, as some of the besieging force had sheltered themselves behind it. But things in the Castle were getting steadily worse. Twenty men were sick, and "scarce forty were healthful to do duty"; the water was foul and scanty; the food was running done, there being "not victuals for ten days save bread and salt herrings"; and, worst of all, the ammunition was nearly exhausted. It was the beginning of the end. Before however yielding to the inevitable, one last endeavour was made by the Duke to find if there were any chance of relief coming. On the night of 9th June Mr John Grant was lowered over the rocks opposite the West Port, with instructions to make his way to friends and signal to the Castle if there was hope of help. Anxiously the Duke waited all next day, but no signal was given. On 11th June it came. Alas, it was 'No help.' So the drums beat a parley, and the white flag was put out.

Not at once, however, came the end. Negotiations indeed began, but when the Duke asked terms and

exchange of hostages in security, his request was abruptly negatived. The only terms were to be unconditional surrender. So in anger the negotiating parties separated, and the fight went on. A few more lives had to be sacrificed before the end should come. That very night a storming party attacked the Castle on the north side, but only to be driven back to the water's edge with several losses. "Advance, you dogs!" the officers were heard to cry, and the men on the ramparts jeered. "Dogs," they shouted, "will you not obey your officers, you dogs?" Similar failure waited a further attack which was made next day by the main approach, when the attacking force was repelled by the garrison, who kept their spirits up by singing throughout the firing, "The King shall enjoy his ain again."

But that was the finish. On the following day, 13th June, the white flag again fluttered from the wall; negotiations for surrender were completed, and the fortress of Scotland's capital passed for ever from the hold of the Stuarts. To the garrison was given freedom to depart; to Colonel Winram was granted security of life and property; to the gallant governor was promised only what grace King William might see fit to bestow. More had not been asked. "For myself," the Duke had said, "I have too much confidence in all the princes who are descended from James VI. to insist on any particular terms, though I must secure a pardon for my soldiers."

It is pleasing to know that the gallant soldier's confidence in the other brave soldier who now sat on the throne of the Stuarts was not misplaced ; nor did William's clemency to the defender of the Castle go unjustified. A thorough Jacobite indeed the Duke remained to the day of his death, but the promise he gave to King William of passive loyalty to his rule was never broken. Honoured by both parties alike, he spent the rest of his days in the quiet retreat of his northern home, and still lives in the memory of his countrymen as the soldier who held the Castle for his exiled King with a loyalty and courage that confer a lustre on the cause that was upheld by so leal a servant.

EIGHTEENTH MEMORY

A Woman Marplot

A.D. 1715

THE year 1715 was an exciting and anxious time throughout Scotland, and nowhere was the anxiety keener than in Edinburgh ; for, should the war break out of which men whispered, the capital would have its full share of troubles. So the good citizens began to prepare for what seemed every day more certain. A volunteer movement was begun which resulted in the enrolling of four hundred citizen soldiers, and at the Castle unusually elaborate precautions were taken against the onset of a hostile force. Ample provisions for a prolonged siege were laid up in store ; trenches were dug in the eastern front facing the approach from the city ; the regular guards were doubled ; and the Nor' Loch by the closing of the sluice, had its modest expanse converted into a good-sized lake, such as any attacking force would find difficult to negotiate.

What had led to all this alarm? The death of 'Good Queen Anne,' and the accession to the throne of the King who lives in Scottish song as 'The wee, wee German Lairdie.' George I. was undoubtedly the reverse of popular with his new subjects, and in no part of his dominions was his popularity less than in Scotland. The time was eminently hopeful for any attempt which the exiled Stuart King might make to regain the throne of his fathers, and Scotland was plainly the likeliest starting-point for any such enterprise. Towards the autumn of 1715 this likelihood became a certainty, and in the early days of September it was known in Edinburgh that the rebellion had begun. At the call of John, Earl of Mar, the Highlands had risen, and, as was to happen again in 1745, so it was now—

The standard on the braes o' Mar
Is up an' streaming rarely ;
The gath'ring pipe on Lochnagar
Is sounding loud an' sairly.
The Hielandmen frae hill an' glen,
Wi' belted plaids an' glitt'ring blades,
Wi' bonnets blue, an' hearts sae true,
Are coming late an' early.

They came in their thousands. Nine thousand of them were soon ready to descend on the Lowland country, which then was garrisoned by but three thousand of King George's troops. First the town of Perth, then Edinburgh, and then England

was the route proposed. The first stage was certain, for Perth was sure to yield ; and Edinburgh was sure also, *if the Castle were previously secured*. But was that possible? If it were, the importance of its capture could hardly be over-estimated, not only from the added strength and prestige which the Jacobite cause would thereby gain, but also by reason of the rich spoils in arms, stores, and money, that would be gained. At least £100,000 was known to be there in ward. So great was the prize, and so valuable its possession, that some daring Jacobites determined to secure it, and fixed on the night of 8th September for their memorable attempt, which all but succeeded.

The scheme originated with Lord Drummond of Perth, and was engineered by Ensign Arthur, a former officer of the Scots Fusilier Guards, who had at one time been quartered with his regiment in the Castle, and so knew the ground intimately. Forty of Lord Drummond's own clansmen and other forty young Jacobites of Edinburgh were selected for the enterprise, which was to be carried out under the leadership of a daring Highlander, Drummond of Balhaldie. The spot chosen for the surprise was the north-west corner of the wall near the old sally-port. By bribes and promises the necessary allies within the Castle had been secured—a sergeant named Ainslie, who was promised a lieutenancy ; a corporal, who was to be rewarded with an ensign's

post; and two privates, who were to receive a money recompense. At eleven o'clock on the night of 8th September these four would be on guard at the sally-port, and it was arranged that at that hour the attacking party should clamber up the rocks at the foot of the wall, carrying with them a strong "scaling ladder made of ropes and with pulleys," and wide enough to bear four men abreast. This the sergeant would haul up and fix to the battlements, when in a trice eighty bold, determined men would be over the wall, and with sword and bullet would do the rest. The Castle once taken, three discharges of artillery were to signal the success of the attempt to friends watching from the Fife shore. Then on the Lomonds a beacon fire would blaze and flash the tidings to the Forfarshire hills, from which it would be yet further signalled to the gathered clans at Invercauld, when, in impetuous might, Mar and his Highlanders would descend on the Lowlands and carry all Scotland before them.

It was a bold, well-planned scheme, and but for a woman's timid fears would in all likelihood have succeeded, and for a time at least might have seriously altered the course of our country's history. Ensign Arthur happened to have a brother in Edinburgh, a doctor, and, like himself, a keen Jacobite. In the coming assault there would inevitably be severe fighting and some bloodshed, when a doctor would be of much service; so, with

the best of intentions, Arthur revealed the scheme to his brother, and invited his co-operation. The doctor readily agreed to accompany the bold Highlanders, but with further thought there came uneasiness; and as the critical hour approached, the unwonted excitement and anxiety of it all told visibly on this non-military combatant. His sharp-eyed anxious wife saw that there was something on her husband's mind and plied him with many questions, until at last, finding evasion impossible, he told the secret. No doubt it was told under a promise of further secrecy, but wifely concern absolved her conscience of any breach of honour, and dwarfed every other consideration save the personal one. What to her was the success of King James VIII. compared with the life and safety of her husband!

Instantly, and without her husband's knowledge, a messenger was despatched to the Lord Justice-Clerk, bearing an anonymous letter revealing the plot, and stating that the assault was to be made *that very night*. It was already ten o'clock when the letter was delivered, and ere the Lord Justice-Clerk's warning note reached the Castle another hour had gone. Even then the plan might not have been frustrated, for Colonel Stewart, the Governor of the Castle, gave the warning very scant attention. Perhaps he did not believe it; perhaps he did, and felt some secret sympathy with an attempt made in the cause of a King whose name he shared. At

all events he did just as little as he possibly could after receiving a warning of the kind. "Let a good watch be kept," he said, and then went calmly to bed.

Fortunately, however, for the safety of the Castle—and unfortunately for the bold conspirators—the chief officer on duty that night, Lieutenant Lindsay, was a man of a different type and of other sympathies. He at once put the garrison under arms, and set himself to a ceaseless round of inspection of the walls all night long. Yet even this vigilance would have been too late had the attack taken place at the hour originally planned, and not all Lindsay's caution nor the intervention of the woman marplot would have saved the Castle from capture.

But the fates were fighting against the Jacobites that night, and among the attacking party themselves there were adverse happenings. The charms of a tavern on a dark stormy night were too great to be resisted, and sufficed to keep a number of the men so pleasantly occupied that the hour for mustering slipped past unnoticed, and eleven o'clock had already struck before the eighty assembled in St. Cuthbert's Churchyard and proceeded through the darkness to the rock under the old postern. The half-hour that followed was as full of dramatic tension and incident as any man of all the eighty could have wished, though not of the precise kind that any of them expected or desired.

Clambering up the rocky face—no easy task in the darkness—they reach the foot of the wall, to find their sentinel friend peering impatiently for them over the battlement. “Quick,” he cries; “you’re terribly late! The patrol will be here at twelve o’clock.”

But, alas, there is yet another delay. *Part of the ladder is still wanting!* Charles Forbes, the Edinburgh rope-merchant who is bringing it, has not yet come, so there is nothing for it but wait. The minutes pass and seem like hours, for as each slips away the chances of success slip away too. At last Balhaldie can bear the suspense no longer. He must do something. “Throw a rope,” he cries to the sergeant, and the rope is thrown. The ladder is hoisted and grappled fast to the battlements. But it helps nothing, for the lowest rung dangles quite beyond the reach of the eager men below. Oh, tardy Charles Forbes, these are no words of blessing that are muttered by some eighty pairs of lips! But whether blessings or curses makes little difference. To wait is all that can be done—to wait, and hope that the missing rope may yet arrive before the patrol comes round to the postern gate and the guard is changed.

But soon that hope is ended, and the chance of success has gone for ever. Approaching steps are heard, and Sergeant Ainslie knows that the game is up. His one thought now is how to save himself.

and divert suspicion, and his actions show that he is a man of resource, if not of principle. Casting off the grappling tackle, he throws down the ladder, fires his musket into the darkness, shouts, "The enemy!" and, in short, does everything that a vigilant sentinel might be expected to do. Lieutenant Lindsay and the patrol rush up, look over the wall, see nothing, but hear the hurried scamper of many feet, and fire into the darkness below. There all is confusion, for since the enterprise has clearly failed, it is each man for himself. Scrambling and sliding down the rocky slope, they reach the bottom, and make their way unpursued round the west end of the loch, where at last they meet the long-expected Charles Forbes with the precious rope, now so useless. What welcome they gave him is not recorded, but it may be well imagined.

Of the men engaged in this assault all but four escaped. Of these, one was Captain M'Lean, a one-legged veteran of Killiecrankie, whose physical infirmity made rapid movement impossible, and the others were Leslie, a page of the Duchess of Gordon, and two 'writer-lads' of Edinburgh. All four were found lying on the slopes, bruised or wounded, when the city guard, who had been alarmed by the firing, came hurrying round from the West Port to give assistance, now no longer needed. It was a poor capture: so poor and unrepresentative that no attempt to punish the four was ever made, the only

sufferer being the traitorous Sergeant Ainslie, whose complicity was discovered, and who, for his treachery, was hanged over the postern gate, the scene of his disloyalty.

So there was no joyous discharge of artillery from the Castle ramparts. The bonfire ready for the kindling on the Lomonds of Fife never blazed up its message into the sky ; and as the long night passed and no beacon glow reddened the Grampian summits, the Earl of Mar, watching and waiting at far Invercauld, knew that the bold enterprise had failed, and that over Edinburgh Castle there still fluttered the flag of the Union and King George.

NINETEENTH MEMORY

The Castle and Prince
Charles Edward

A.D. 1745

IT was September 1745, and in the old Palace of Holyrood for the last time in Scottish story, a Prince of the House of Stuart held his Court. When, some three weeks before, tidings of the southward march of Prince Charles and his Highlanders had reached the capital there had been much alarm among the citizens, succeeded by many stout words and precautionary deeds. The trained bands of the city, one thousand strong, furbished up their ancient firelocks, whose most serious use hitherto had been to discharge a joyous volley on some city holiday. An 'Edinburgh regiment' of volunteers was hastily enrolled: and under the guidance of 'worthy Professor Maclaurin, the Archimedes of the age,' batteries were mounted at suitable points on the old

city walls. But when the fierce Highlanders came within striking distance, the courage of the citizens evaporated, the trained bands melted away with ludicrous rapidity, and of real resistance there was none. In the early morning of 17th September, a surprise party of Lochiel's Camerons rushed the city guard at the Netherbow, and the whole city, with the exception of the Castle, at once yielded.

Tidings were immediately sent to the Prince, who was waiting with his forces at Slateford, and no sooner did he learn of Lochiel's success than the order to march was given, and by midday his whole army, numbering some three thousand men, was camped in Hunter's Bog, a sheltered hollow at the foot of Arthur's Seat. The proudest moment of Charles' life had arrived. At the other side of the hollow, beyond the ridge, lay Holyrood, the Palace of the Stuart Kings; and attended by the Duke of Perth, Lord Elcho, and his guard of loyal clansmen, the 'last hope' of the Stuarts rode forward to claim his own. By St. Anthony's Chapel he halted, and with intense, if suppressed, emotion looked for the first time on the ancient Palace with the grey old city stretching away behind it. The sight, inspiring in itself by reason of its beauty and its memories, was made for him yet more inspiring by the crowds of expectant citizens who filled the surrounding park. All Edinburgh had turned out to greet him; some from passionate

loyalty, many from prudential considerations in view of possibilities, most from curiosity. But the Prince did not stay to analyse the motives. The holiday crowd, the cheers, the waving banners, were enough for the moment, and with a heart beating quick with hope he dismounted, and entered the Palace of his ancestors. Yet ere he passed within the gateway, tradition says he received a rude reminder that to enter the Palace was not to win the Crown. From the direction of the Castle was heard an ominous report, and in a few seconds a cannon ball crashed full against the wall of Holyrood. The message needed no interpreter. The City might have yielded, the Palace might have opened its gates, but the Castle hurled its defiance against the bold invader.

For a few days, however, the old fortress was left untroubled, and the handsome young Prince set himself to charm Edinburgh. How he might have succeeded is doubtful, had it not been that he was soon able to back his persuasive graces with the lustre of a victory. Three days after his arrival, he and his Highlanders marched out to meet the Royal troops which, under General Cope, were advancing from Dunbar towards the City, surprised them in the grey dawn of the morning at Prestonpans, and inflicted a defeat so utter and humiliating as to be unforgettable. In five minutes the battle was over; four hundred men were slain, over two

thousand were prisoners, and only some two hundred escaped in panic flight. Little wonder that the taunting song which commemorates the fight, caught and has held the imagination of Scotsmen :—

Hey, Johnnie Cope, are ye wauking yet !
Or are ye sleeping, I would wit ?
O haste ye, get up, for the drums do beat,
O fy, Cope, rise in the morning !

Flushed with victory the Prince returned to Edinburgh, where he was greeted with an enthusiasm much less superficial than that of three days before, and as the pipes played him into Holyrood to the tune of 'The King shall enjoy his ain again,' there were many who thought that the prediction might well prove true.

But there was still the Castle. As an effective hostile force it did not indeed count for much ; yet the significance for the Prince and his cause of a Hanoverian garrison in the heart of Edinburgh was great, and correspondingly significant would be its disappearance. With the capture or surrender of the Castle, and the hoisting of the Stuart flag from its battlements, Scotland's adhesion to the cause would be so unmistakably proclaimed, that the last waverer might well be won. But, however desirable its acquisition, direct assault was not politic—at least not until by further conciliatory tactics the City had been firmly won over. So for the time. Charles was content with placing a guard of the

Camerons in the Weighhouse, at the head of the High Street, to watch the Castle entrance, while he gave himself anew to the task of wooing his Scottish countrymen by many a royal grace.

It was a task for which nature had admirably suited him, and he discharged it well. Tall, handsome, and debonair, the grace and kindness of his manner charmed the ladies of Edinburgh, and was not without influence on their less impressionable husbands. Holyrood revived its ancient fame and grew familiar with courtly ways and royal receptions. Whenever the young Prince rode along the streets, he won the admiration of the common people, alike by his kingly appearance and his frequent gracious words. Toleration was the order of the day. The Protestant ministers, who had fled from Edinburgh, feeling certain that their Church services would be forbidden, were encouraged to return, and were assured that absolute freedom of worship would be accorded to all. And it was; for even when one of their number, Mr Macvicar, the minister of St. Cuthbert's, strained this liberty to excess he was not interfered with. The guns of the Castle immediately overhead gave him perhaps a sense of unusual security, and at a service in his church, which was attended by many Jacobites, he offered the customary prayers for King George, adding besides this undoubtedly offensive petition: "As to this young person who has come among us seeking an earthly

crown, do Thou, in Thy merciful favour, grant him a heavenly one." "An honest fool," was all that Charles said, when the objectionable prayer was reported. Everything, in short, was done to conciliate the Scottish people and revive their attachment to the Stuart line; and in the proclamations from Holyrood, which were plentifully issued at the time, promises to redress all grievances were as abundant as were predictions of the prosperous future that awaited Scotland on the return of the exiled King James. As described by Mrs Cockburn (the authoress of *The Flowers of the Forest*) in a satirical poem, the Prince was all things to all men that he might gain some.

Have you any laws to mend?
Or have you any grievance?
I am a hero to my trade
And truly a most leal Prince.
Would you have war, would you have peace,
Would you be free of taxes?
Come chapping to my father's door,
You need not doubt of access.

After ten days of this soothing treatment, Charles thought he might now deal with the Castle, more especially as the garrison was beginning to resent the presence of the Highland guard at the Weigh-house, and had fired an occasional shot in that direction. So on 29th September communication between the Castle and the City was forbidden. The blockade had begun; and the men in the

Castle were not sorry, for they were keen soldiers and quite ready to give a good account of themselves. In General Preston, the Governor of the Castle, the Jacobite cause had a determined foe, and along with him was General Guest, the Commander of the Royal Forces in Scotland, not so keen perhaps in his antagonism, but a loyal Hanoverian none the less. Under these leaders was the garrison, some two hundred strong, which had been further increased by one hundred fugitives from Prestonpans. With a fairly ample store of provisions, the fortress was thus well equipped for meeting any attack which the Jacobite forces were likely to make. A prolonged siege was out of the question, as the Prince must needs move on to England at an early date. Any hope of success in the matter of the Castle plainly lay either in its voluntary surrender, or in a sudden strenuous assault. Of the former there was little prospect, and how faint the grounds for the latter hope, the event amply proved. On 29th September the blockade had been declared, and on 5th October it was abandoned. Yet in these seven days occurred sundry lively passages both of correspondence and of fighting.

The stationing of guards to enforce the blockade was promptly answered from the Castle by a communication from the Governor to the City authorities, that if free intercourse with the Castle was obstructed, he would open fire upon the City

and on the obstructing guards. The mere threat threw the City fathers into a panic, and hastening to Holyrood they begged the Prince to cancel the blockade and save the City from destruction. But the Prince saw things in another light. To remove the blockade would be to abandon his hopes, and he preferred to answer threat by counter-threat.

"I shall be heartily sorry," he wrote, in a letter addressed to the City authorities, but intended for General Preston's perusal, "for any mischief that may befall the city, and shall make it my peculiar care to indemnify you in the most ample manner. In the meantime I shall make full reprisals upon the estates of those who are now in the Castle, and even upon all who are known to be open abettors of the German (!) Government, if I am forced to it by the continuance of such inhumanities."—
Holyrood House, Sept. 30, 1745. CHARLES, *P.R.*

To the threat General Preston, whose estate in Fife was specially referred to, was indifferent. But in response to the urgent prayer of the City authorities, who had despatched a messenger to intercede with King George in London, he agreed to a truce for six days, conditionally on the free communication between the Castle and the City being undisturbed. By the end of the first day, however, the truce was broken. On 1st October the guard at the Weighhouse fired on some messengers who were taking provisions into the

Castle. At once the fortress guns spoke out, and hostilities began in earnest.

The guard at the Weighhouse was strengthened, other detachments of the Camerons were posted in St. Cuthbert's Churchyard and in Livingstone's Yards, and intermittent firing was kept up between the Castle and all three positions. But the heavier metal was in the Castle, and General Preston decided that the time had come to use it. On 4th October at noon a notice was sent to the inhabitants of James' Court, and other houses in the immediate neighbourhood, that the guns were to begin to play, and that all who wished to save their lives had better remove themselves with the utmost speed. In a trice the houses at the head of the High Street were tenantless, and throughout the afternoon a steady cannonading took place (one relic of which is still to be seen in a cannon ball fast embedded in the gable of 'Cannon Ball House,' the first house on the South side of the street). Towards evening a sortie was made by the garrison, when under the protection of the guns a trench was dug midway between the gate and the top of the High Street, and on the earthen rampart thus thrown up were mounted some field pieces, which had full command of the Weighhouse. Throughout the night a constant fire was kept up, and no little damage resulted, but the Highlanders still maintained their position. At five o'clock next afternoon,

5th October, the one real assault was made. The persistent fire from the trench had irritated the Camerons beyond endurance, and in the face of tremendous volleys they dashed up the head of the street, carried the earthworks, drove the Castle troops back into the citadel, and remained for the moment masters of the field. But the position was hopelessly exposed, and having vindicated their courage the Highlanders could do nothing but reluctantly seek shelter in the City from the fire of the Half-Moon Battery.

Brief though the contest had been, and not inglorious, it had cost the Prince a score of valuable lives which he could ill spare, and the damage to the City was costing him the loyalty of citizens which he could spare even less. So, reluctantly, he made a virtue of a necessity, and issued his final proclamation concerning the Castle, the magniloquence of which may be pardoned when one thinks of the bitter necessity which led to its issue :—

“Charles, Prince of Wales, &c., Regent of Scotland, England, France and Ireland, and the Dominions thereunto belonging.—It is with the greatest regret that we are hourly informed of the many murders which are committed upon the innocent inhabitants of this City, by the inhuman commanders and garrison of the Castle of Edinburgh. . . . As we have threatened, we might justly proceed to use the powers which God has put into our hands to chastise those who are instrumental in the ruin of this Capital, by reprisals upon the estates and fortunes of those who

are against us: but we think it no ways derogatory to the glory of a prince to suspend punishment or alter a resolution, when thereby the lives of innocent men can be saved. In consequence of this sentiment, our humanity has yielded to the barbarity of our common enemy: the blockade of the Castle is hereby taken off, and the punishment threatened suspended.

"Given at our Palace of Holyrood House, the 5th day of October 1745 years.

"CHARLES, P.R."

Fewer words might have served better, but the pill required a little gilding. The preamble gratified the Prince, and the citizens were entirely satisfied with the conclusion. The blockade was raised, they and their belongings were no longer in danger of sudden destruction, and that sufficed.

Thus ended the last 'siege' of Edinburgh Castle. For a few weeks longer the Prince tarried in Holyrood, receiving daily accessions to his army until his force numbered nigh six thousand men, but the soldiers of King George behind the Castle walls were left severely alone. And when 1st November arrived, they found themselves once more undisputed masters of the City; for, on that day, after a grand review on Portobello sands, the whole Jacobite Army, with pipes playing and banners flying, marched away to the South to put the fortunes of the Stuarts to the final test. The Prince had looked his last upon the Castle, 'and the Castle had seen its last of him. Never was the Stuart banner to adorn that ancient fortress of his race. Never within those walls were

these standards, so proudly borne by the southward marching clans, to float out in triumph on the breeze. Yet—strange fate!—in sad dishonour they were one day to find there a temporary resting-place, which was to be the prelude to a deeper shame. On Culloden's field, not six months after the farewell to Holyrood, the hopes of the Stuarts were for ever quenched, and out of the clenched hands of the dead Highlanders who lay on that disastrous field, were wrenched the standards they had so bravely carried. Conveyed to Edinburgh in triumph, they were borne to the Castle, and there exhibited as spoils of war, the tokens of unquestioned victory. Thus it was that at last the banners of the Stuarts gained entrance to the Castle.

Had that been their final fate, no soldier would ever have complained. Defeat and capture bring no dishonour. But to capture the Duke of Cumberland proceeded to add shame. The order was given that the standards be burned at the Market Cross—an unworthy order and unworthily obeyed. Brave men had carried these colours through fire and flood, and at last had died in their defence. Mistaken they may have been in their ideals and their endeavours, but their banners spoke of nothing but a loyal devotion and a splendid gallantry which will ever be Scotland's pride. Yet when from the Castle these symbols of a lost cause were carried to the burning, the hands to which they were entrusted were those of the least ,

esteemed of all Edinburgh's citizens. Prince Charles' own standard was borne by the public executioner! Thirteen other banners, each embroidered with the arms of a noble House, were carried by chimney sweepers! One by one they were committed to the flames, and one by one the herald proclaimed as outlaws the chieftains to whom the banners had belonged.

So it was that with every possible mark of shame the association of Prince Charles Edward with Edinburgh and its Castle came to an end. Yet to-day there is no thought of shame in the minds of Scotsmen when they think of him. Whatever be their judgment as to his bold and unfortunate enterprise, they remember him with a great tenderness and not a little pride: and think of him as the hero inspirer of Scotland's sweetest songs, as the Prince whose brave adventure closed the long romance of Scottish history, and as the son of Scotland's ancient Kings, whose brief Court at Holyrood added a memorable page to the story of Royal Edinburgh.

TWENTIETH MEMORY

‘The Honours of Scotland.’

AMONG the many points of interest in and around the old Castle, a popular vote would probably give the premier place to *Queen Mary's Room*. The deathless spell of Scotland's loveliest Queen confers a lasting charm on every spot associated with her name. Yet there is one other apartment in the old fortress whose interest falls little short of that possessed by the chamber of the unfortunate Queen, and whose contents evoke memories unquestionably more varied. This is the famous *Crown Room*, where rest the ‘Honours of Scotland’—the Crown, the Sceptre, and the Sword of State—along with the other jewelled insignia which have been handed down from one or other of Scotland’s Kings.

When compared with the British Regalia which repose in the Tower of London, the Regalia of Scotland takes a very modest place. Neither in intrinsic worth nor elaborateness of design and

workmanship can they stand comparison, but in the more important qualities of age and heroic memories they are infinitely richer. If it were not indeed for their association with Queen Victoria the Good, with King Edward the Peacemaker, and with our present Sovereign, gracious and beloved, the British Regalia, dating only from the reign of Charles II. would have little suggestive charm or reverence-evoking power. But the Regalia of the Northern Kingdom—Crown, Sceptre, and Sword, and especially the Crown—both in their origin and associations are linked with some of the most romantic phases of Scotland's romantic story.

To look upon the Crown to-day, as it rests on the Royal velvet, calls up memories of the greatest of Scottish Kings, Robert the Bruce. This, indeed, is not the famous crown with which the Bruce himself was crowned by the fair hands of the Countess of Buchan. That 'coronel of gold,' did we possess it, would be worthy of a Castle as a shrine for itself alone. But when it had done its work it perished. Like the Crown of the older Scottish Kings, it fell into the hands of Edward I., the 'Hammer of the Scots,' and was crushed to dust. Not so the King who wore it. To crush him was a harder task: and when at Bannockburn he faced the English foe, around his helmet he wore a circlet of fine gold, in protest against the past, in earnest of the future. Scotland's King, it meant,

would not long be crownless. Nor was he, for no sooner had Scottish independence been secured, than the order was given for the making of a Crown worthy of the ancient kingdom.

That the work was well done we see to-day on looking at the lower portion of the Crown which now reposes in the Castle. The broad double band of gold, flashing with jewels and surmounted by a circle of graceful *fleur-de-lis*, alternating with crosses, is the Crown of Scotland even as it was in the days of the great King Robert. One wonders if, in the new Crown, there was inwrought the golden circlet of Bannockburn fame. So Sir Walter happily surmises; and the very fitness of the blending makes it not improbable, for from Bannockburn dated the security of the throne, of which the newly-made Crown was to be henceforth the symbol.

So the 'Honours of Scotland' began to be, now full six hundred years ago. In Scotland other symbols of the Royal estate were then unknown; the Crown sufficed. But in countries of greater name and fame monarchy had for its emblems a Sceptre and a Sword as well, and as the Royal seat in Scotland grew more firm, her monarchs followed suit. By King James IV., the bravest of the Stuarts, there was added the *Sword of State*, a gift to the young Monarch from Pope Julius II., whose badge of oak leaves and acorns is prominent in its rich chasing.

To James V. it fell to complete the 'Honours' by the addition of the *Sceptre*, whose touch was henceforth to indicate the Royal approval of Scottish laws. To the same King too was due the significant 'Closing of the Crown,' by the superimposing of two arches crossed, which converted it from a Royal coronet into an Imperial crown. This was a favourite fashion of the day with kings, who sought by this means not merely to distinguish their crown from the coronet of the great nobles, but also to symbolise their country's independence of any higher earthly power. When a Crown was 'closed,' fealty was declared to be due by the wearer to none save God.

With these changes and additions the 'Honours' reached their final form, and for the last four hundred years they have been even as they are to-day. Their chaste simplicity of design and the excellence of their workmanship are ever admired, while the stirring memories connected with the monarchs who in succession wore the crown and wielded the sceptre, give to the Honours an interest that for Scotsmen can never die. From the great Bruce down through the long line of his Stuart descendants, thirteen royal brows have in turn been circled by that Crown. The hero King of Flodden Field, Mary of sad yet glorious memory, Charles I., her unfortunate grandson, only too true a Stuart, and others in the long succession of minor note and lesser worth—all alike felt its pressure and experienced

the thrill of pride and purpose which accompanied its touch.

For the first three hundred years of their existence the only associations of the 'Honours' were with the great days of national rejoicing which marked the beginning of each new reign, when the people's heart beat quick with hope as they saw the Crown placed upon a new King's brow. These were the years of the Honours' pride. But like not a few of the monarchs with whose golden hours they were associated, they were fated to experience fortunes of another kind. Days were to come when their very existence would be threatened, and when flight and concealment alone would save them from the clutch of a powerful foe. Nor was this all: when these perilous times should end, humiliation was to follow such as has been rarely meted out to any crown, and only after two centuries of adversity were the 'Honours' to be restored to their rightful place.

The time of greatest peril was in Cromwell's days. The stern Lord Protector had little liking for Kings, and the insignia of royalty he abhorred. "Take away that bauble," had been his words of contemptuous dismissal to the crown-capped mace in the House of Commons, and wherever the mark of the Crown was found, and he had power to deface it, it was defaced. The Regalia of England went

into the melting pot. The Royal Arms of Scotland, graven over the entrance to Edinburgh Castle, were obliterated as soon as the fortress had been taken ; and the Scottish Regalia were faced with sure destruction—if they could be secured. But for the time at least they were beyond the reach of the destroyer. Well aware of Cromwell's antipathy to such 'baubles,' the Scottish Parliament ere it rose—which it hastily did, on 6th June 1650, on hearing of Cromwell's rapid approach to Edinburgh—had selected the Castle of Dunnottar as the best 'strong room' in which to deposit the Honours. This isolated sea-girt fortress was the property of the Earl Mareschal, and to him the Parliament entrusted the precious treasures, with the order that he should "cause transport the saidis honouris to the hous of Dunnottar, thair to be keepit by him till further ordouris."

It was realised that Cromwell's men would soon be on their track, and that to defend Dunnottar against their attack would not be easy. A strong garrison was therefore posted in the Castle and well supplied with artillery. George Ogilvy of Barras, a proved soldier, was placed in command, a store of provisions was laid in for use during the impending siege, and in the event of Cromwell's forces attempting a capture, it was certain they would meet with stout resistance. But Cromwell was determined to secure the Regalia, and under his

instructions a siege of such vigour and persistence ensued as to make the ultimate surrender of the fortress—with its contents—merely a matter of time. If the 'Honours' were to be saved, it became clear that they must be removed before the hour of surrender should strike.

But how was this to be done? Charles II., then a fugitive on the Continent, was asked to send a swift vessel which might approach the Castle on the sea front and bear away the treasure. But the appeal was fruitless. No ship could the penniless King provide, and had it not been for the courage and ingenuity of three Scottish women, Cromwell's grasp had surely closed upon the longed-for 'baubles.' But by these three heroines he was thwarted,—The Lady Mareschal, Mrs Ogilvy the wife of the Governor of the Castle, and Mrs Granger the wife of the minister of the parish of Kinneff. The Lady Mareschal had the credit of suggesting the plan: to the two other brave women it fell to carry it out.

Mrs Ogilvy and Mrs Granger were intimate friends, and although the Castle was closely besieged, the courtesy of General Lambert, who was in charge of the operations, sanctioned an occasional visit on the part of the minister's wife. It proved an expensive courtesy. One day, in the month of March 1652, Mrs Granger visited her friend. Accompanied by her maid, she was allowed to enter the fortress, and

when, after a reasonable stay, she reappeared, the gallant General escorted both her and her maid through the English camp, helped her on her horse and waved good-bye. It never occurred to him that the good lady was somewhat stouter when she came out than when she went in, nor did he think of examining two bundles of lint carried by the servant maid. Industrious women, he may have thought, their spinning wheels would soon be busy! But when they left the camp behind them and took the road for Kinneff, the 'Honours of Scotland' had been saved. In Mrs Granger's lap reposed the Crown, and concealed in the bundles of lint were the Sceptre and the Sword. All unaided the women had done it, for of set purpose they had kept the Governor in ignorance, so that in coming days he might honestly swear that he knew not where the Regalia had vanished to. It was a daring and ingenious plan, right bravely carried through.

But the end was not yet. The manse of Kinneff was no safe receiving-house, for it was highly probable—as indeed proved the case—that when the Castle should surrender, and the Regalia be found amissing, the minister's wife would be suspected, and the minister's house would be searched. So the precious treasures were committed to the guardianship of the house of God, and in the dead of night, deep in the earth beneath the floor of the Parish Church of Kinneff, the minister and his wife buried

their dangerous trust. In a document sent by the Minister to the Countess Mareschal to acquaint her with the success of the venture, and dated 31st March 1652, he quaintly tells how the burial proceeded:—

"I, Mr James Granger, minister of Kinneff, grant me to have in my custody the Honours of the Kingdom, viz. the Crown, Sceptre, and Sword. For the Crown and Sceptre I raised the pavement stone just before the pulpit, in the night tyme, and digged under it ane hole, and put them in there, and filled up the hole, and laid down the stone just as it was before, and removed the mould that remained, that none would have decerned the stone to have been raised at all: the Sword, again, at the West end of the Church, amongst some common seits that stand there. I digged down in the ground betwixt the two foremost of these seits, and laid it down within the case of it, and covered it up, as that removing the superfluous mould it could not be decerned by any body: and if it shall please God to call me by death before they be called for, your Ladyship will find them in that place."

Two months later Dunnottar had to surrender, and great was the vexation of the victors to find that the coveted Regalia had disappeared—none knew where or how. The Governor and his wife were treated with the utmost harshness, with a view to extorting a confession. Fined and imprisoned they endured much. So great indeed were their sufferings that Mrs Ogilvy died under them, but the secret was kept. Still the search went on, nor did it cease until a diligently circulated report,

found credence that prior to the surrender the Countess Mareschal's son, Sir John Keith, had rescued the Regalia from the Castle in a vessel, and had conveyed them to the King across the water. So, all unsuspected, the 'Honours' were permitted to lie in their consecrated grave, occasionally inspected by the minister and his wife for the purpose of renewing the cerements, but otherwise undisturbed, waiting until 'called for' by the King. And when in 1660 the King returned, while in England he found it necessary to create a new Regalia, in Scotland the 'Honours' of his fathers were awaiting his Royal pleasure. Would that he had been worthier of the 'Honours' and of the devotion that had preserved them !

But further adventures were in store. With the restoration of the monarchy the hour of the Honours' greatest danger had passed, but there was yet to follow a whole century of humiliation such as even Cromwell's hostile search had not inflicted. In Dunnottar and in Kinneff the 'Honours' had sought concealment from the gaze of an enemy: the time was now approaching when they were to be thrust into long dark obscurity that they might not be looked upon by the eyes of Scotland's own sons. This indignity was part of the price which Scotland paid for her Union with England.

There are few Scotsmen to-day who seriously question the wisdom of that Union. The solid

gains which have thereby accrued to our country and our nation are undeniable, but they were not obtained without some sacrifices; and at the time when the Union negotiations were being carried through it was the sacrifices rather than the gains which impressed the Scottish people. Throughout the country there was little favour for the proposal. In the Scottish Parliament the protesting minority only reflected the general sentiment of the people when they declared that the national independence was being surrendered. Said Lord Belhaven, the chief orator of the minority, pointing as he spoke to the Regalia that lay on the table of the House, and so giving further point to his impassioned words:— “Hannibal is come within our gates: Hannibal is come the length of this table: he is at the foot of this throne: he will demolish this throne: he will seize upon these Regalia: he will take them as his *spolia opima*, and whip us out of this House never to return again.”

In this reference to the Regalia the speaker touched on a point on which the whole nation was at his back. The Union might come, despite all protest. The Scottish Parliament might die, and the glory and romance of the old Kingdom and its Capital might in consequence largely pass away. But the ‘Honours of Scotland’ must be secured to the country, and never be permitted to be removed from Scottish custody. So to the Treaty of Union, without one protesting voice, an article was added

which provided that "The Crown, Sceptre, and Sword . . . continue to be kept as they are in that part of the United Kingdom now called Scotland, and that they shall remain so in all time coming, notwithstanding of this Union."

It may seem now but a barren victory—to have kept the shadow of Royalty and let the substance go—but the Union party did not so regard it. To them this concession was the cause of grave apprehension ; and nothing reflects more impressively the keen tension of the time, than the treatment it was thought necessary to accord to the old insignia of the Scottish Kings, now by treaty fast thirled to Scotland. With the popular temper as it then was, the old Scottish Crown seemed a veritable storm-centre. For Scotsmen to look upon it was to stir memories which might any day provoke a revolution. So for the Union's sake the danger centre was removed from all sight of men. On 26th March 1707, the Crown, Sceptre, and Sword of Scotland were placed in a strong box, which was securely locked, and deposited in the dark vaulted 'Crown Room' of Edinburgh Castle. The room was closed by double doors, one of oak, the other of iron. These were made fast by locks and bolts, and then — the keys of both box and room were conveniently lost, and the 'Honours of Scotland' left to a long sleep of over one hundred years! It was a sleep of shame, dishonouring to the memory of Scotland's Kings, but reflecting yet deeper dishonour on the

Scotsmen who for generations permitted the slumber to continue undisturbed.

That it was at long last disturbed, and an end put to the indignity, was one of the many services rendered to Scotland by Sir Walter Scott. With the lapse of a century, all fears of a rupture of the Union had died away, and when at the instigation of Sir Walter, a public representation was made to the Government as to the condition of the Scottish Regalia it proved effective. The Prince Regent gave orders that the Crown Room in Edinburgh Castle should be opened, and the Regalia once more brought to the light of day. On 4th February 1818 the exhumation took place. Ten of the Commissioners nominated, one being Sir Walter, proceeded to the Castle to obey the welcome order, and entering the long-closed chamber found the great chest lying where it had been placed one hundred and ten years before. But did the chest still hold the 'Honours'? The blacksmith's blows, as he forced the locks, sounded hollow, and the anxious spectators began to dread that when the lid should be thrown back there would be only emptiness revealed. Soon however their fears vanished, for when the box was opened, reposing at the bottom were seen lying some bulky bundles covered with mouldy wrappings, and on these being unrolled the Crown, the Sceptre, and the Sword of Scotland lay exposed—all uninjured from their century's repose. Up went a glad shout from all who were in the room. Up, immediately

after, went the Royal Standard on the Castle wall. And up, from the thousands below, who were eagerly waiting the result, went as loud a shout of joy as ever welcomed Royal Crown. The 'Honours of Scotland' had emerged from their last dishonour.

To-day, as ever since that day of resurrection, they are the pride of every Scot who looks upon them. Still in the Crown Room, but no longer huddled away in a gloomy chest, they rest throned in a manner worthy of their long history and great associations. For them, even as for the grey old Castle which is their fitting shrine, the day of great things is ended. No more do the 'Honours' play their part at the crowning of Scotland's Kings, nor is the old fortress ever likely to be again of serious avail in the defence of the Kingdom. But if for Crown and Castle alike the time of active service is indeed over, they have their uses still. Their memories abide and their inspiration never dies. With an eloquence all their own they speak to each passing generation of the Scotland of former days, and serve to keep alive the Scotsman's pride in his country and its story. The tales they tell may be marred occasionally by the human imperfections they reveal—sometimes also by the human sins—but far oftener it is otherwise: and both Crown and Castle are glorified by the noble record which is theirs, of the brave deeds and fervent loyalties of Scottish men and women in the service of their King, their Country, or their God.